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RELATIONSHIP: THE FOUNDATION
OF A TEAM MINISTRY

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE CURRENT DILEMMA AND SETTING	1
Urbanization and the need for multiple	
staff	1
Problems facing the urban church	5
II. RELATIONSHIP AND STRUCTURE	19
Introduction	19
Junior - Senior staff structure	26
Specialized group ministry	35
Team ministry	41
III. RELATIONSHIP: A PRIMARY INGREDIENT	57
IV. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONSHIP	80
V. THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIP	99
Introduction	99
Personal fulfillment	108
Practical aspects	119
VI. RELATIONSHIP AND AUTHORITY	133
BIBLIOGRAPHY	154
APPENDIX I. Introduction to a Team Ministry . . .	160
APPENDIX II. Two Heads are Better than One . . .	170

CHAPTER I

THE CURRENT DILEMMA

I. URBANIZATION AND NEED FOR MULTIPLE STAFF

Several current dynamic forces at work in human history are having a profound effect on church structure and program. The population explosion, along with the concentration of an increasingly greater number of people into certain closely defined areas, has created a phenomenon known as urbanization or megapolis. One need not present proof of this statement since it is one of the obvious facts of the twentieth century. This trend in population movement is clearly reflected in the Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches. While the majority of our local churches are located in rural areas, an ever increasing percentage of our total Brotherhood membership is to be found in our urban churches.

	1940	1950	1960
Total Membership:	1,427,713	1,512,124	1,245,712
Rural Membership:	558,032 (39.8%)	524,741 (36%)	373,959 (30.1%)
Urban Membership:	869,681 (60.2%)	987,383 (64%)	871,753 ¹ (69.9%)

¹"Under the urban definition established for use in the U.S. Census, the urban population comprises all persons living in (a) places of 2,500 inhabitants or more incorporated as cities, towns, and village (b) the densely settled urban fringe, including both incorporated and unincorporated

Number of Churches:	1940	1950	1960
Rural:	5,420	4,970	4,668
Urban:	2,339	2,518	3,283 ²

A close analysis of these studies will show that the Disciples of Christ during the last two decades exceeded the population rate of gain only in places of greater than fifty thousand persons. During this same period in all rural areas, Disciples were in a reversed relationship to the rate of gain in the population, that is, while the population was gaining, Disciples of Christ resident membership was decreasing. The substantial increase in the resident membership of the Disciples of Christ was found in the Urban parts of counties in Standard Metropolitan Areas. Other urban membership showed only moderate gains. This supports the theory that the movement is to the larger metropolitan centers with their densely populated areas.

places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside any urban fringe. The remaining population is classified as rural. . . . Membership in these statistical studies was defined as resident membership. Nonresident members were not considered since they cannot be allocated geographically as can resident members." Dale W. Medearis, "A Population Study of Disciples of Christ, 1940-1950" (Indianapolis, Indiana: Department of Church Development of The United Christian Missionary Society, 1951), pp. 9, 22; and Dale M. Medearis, "1961 Year Book Study" (Indianapolis, Indiana: Department of Church Development of The United Christian Missionary Society, 1962), pp. 27, 43.

² Medearis, "A Population Study . . .," p. 31; and Art Stanley, "U.S. Population: Urban and Rural, 1950 and 1960" (Indianapolis, Indiana: Department of Urban Church of The United Christian Missionary Society, 1962).

There is no doubt that the urbanity of the membership of the Disciples of Christ has increased in the two decades from 1940 to 1960. Taking the nation as a whole, this increase has been from sixty per cent to seventy per cent.

In turning to the population increase of the entire United States it is to be noted that while the overall picture is one of record gain, nearly one-half of the counties lost population, while during these same years other counties were registering gains of twenty per cent or more.³ Again we have a picture of a very uneven growth pattern. The densely populated urban areas were increasing at phenomenal rates while many of the rural communities were registering a population decline.

This apparent, yet unbelievable growth, can be demonstrated by the Van Nuys and San Fernando Valley areas of Los Angeles County, the geographical area of our experimental team ministry. A study of it will therefore serve the dual purpose of supporting the theory of rapid urbanization and, at the same time, give needed insight into the situation into which this concept of staff relationships came to life and continues to live.

The growth of the San Fernando Valley is a fairly

³ Medearis, "A Population Study . . .," p. 14.

recent phenomenon. In the early 1890's Isaac Lankershim and Isaac N. Van Nuys entered the valley and built one of the largest wheat empires of the day. The valley could have been described as thirty-one thousand acres of wheat until 1909 when Harry Chandler, representing a syndicate of developers, purchased the valley from the Van Nuys family and began the process of subdividing and developing populated areas.⁴

From 1910 to the second World War, the San Fernando Valley experienced a rapid growth, but nothing to be compared with the postwar decades.

Population

	Van Nuys	San Fernando Valley	Los Angeles
1940	20,298	155,443	1,504,277
1950	63,693	402,538	1,970,358
1960	112,118	840,531	2,483,900
1964	127,300	858,500	2,660,000 ⁵

There is no doubt that urbanism is a fact of our time generally, and a fact in the San Fernando Valley in particular. As the local population increases, and there is a corresponding increase in local church population, multiple staffs become both possible and necessary. The frequency of some type of multiple staff structure is on

⁴Renie Nadeau, "Wheat Ruled the Valley," Westways, IV (April, 1963), 18.

⁵Renie Nadeau, "The Men Who Opened the Valley," Westways, IV (May, 1963), 24.

the increase in the churches of highly populated centers. In the three Southern California Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church, nearly fifty per cent of the 252 Churches have multiple staffs. Many of these have three or more ordained ministers and commissioned church workers.⁶ Of the 125 cooperating Disciples of Christ Churches in Southern California, fifty-one have multiple staffs. This forty and eight-tenths percentage is an increase over previous years.⁷ The need for multiple staffs in churches is a clearly established fact. If the present population trends continue, the need will increase in the immediate future. While this need is expanding, the problems of multiple staffs continue to abound and even seem to increase. The attempt of this joint dissertation will be to deal creatively with the problem of multiple staff ministries.

II. PROBLEMS FACING THE URBAN CHURCH

Many urban churches need multiple staffs, but a simple increase in the number of staff personnel alone will not solve the problems of urbania, and could well add to

⁶ Herman J. Sweet, The Multiple Staff in the Local Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 9.

⁷ "Southern California Christian Churches Ministers Directory" (prepared by The Area Office of the Christian Churches of Southern California, 1964).

the problems of a church. Some time must be spent looking at the problems that beset urban life and the church that attempts to minister to such a community.

Following a general study of common problems, we shall proceed rapidly to an examination of the San Fernando Valley's growth toward urbanization in order to get at some of the problems involved in such rapid change and to set forth additional background material regarding the type of situation in which our experimental team ministry has functioned.

There is little doubt in the minds of most persons concerned with the urban church that there is something amiss. A "Crisis of Relevance" threatens the very existence of the Protestant church which finds itself in the middle of an urban growth pattern. This is due to at least three factors: first, in times of transition the church has historically lagged behind; in the second place, most Protestant churches still operate from a rural strategy and philosophy which misses the mark in the eyes of the city-dweller; and finally, the previous church experience of the now city-dwellers has not been related to his deep needs; therefore in his new, big-city environment he sees the church in its traditional image. One of the major reasons for attendance and participation in the institutional church prior to their move to the city was that such

involvement fulfilled the feelings of "ought" and "habit." Also, the need for social acceptance or perhaps more narrowly, family acceptance, was a motivating factor. The move to the city with its freedom and anonymity causes much of this to break down. Many of the motivating pressures of rural life, which gave church participation particular meaning, are lost in the move to the city where the now city dweller discovers none to take their place. Once in the city they find that their lives are full of "things" to do as various groups are equally able to meet the needs to which the church alone addressed itself in the rural community. Thus the meaning and purpose of the church in the urban setting is lost as the city dweller sees himself with new needs to which the typical church is unable to minister.

Kloetzli, in his book, Urban Church Planning, begins with the statement that the rise of modern America is the rise of her cities. It is just as correct to state that the dilemma of the modern church is the rise of urban growth and changing cultural patterns.

Here is the world of the elevated, the skyscraper, and the subway; of packing houses, freight yards, docks, steel mills, mail-order houses, universities, television studios, and churches of every creed; of open markets and streets of banking, congested alleys and shaded residential avenues; of furnished rooms to rent, brown-stone houses, houses of glass, parkways and boulevards, white ghettos and black ghettos. Here is a world of neon, stone, and steel, an ever widening household of overflowing millions. Not all

have taken the journey to the city, it is true, yet few are removed from the force of its impact and its way of life.⁸

Living in a city gradually and subtly creates changes in personality, so that when the urbanite visits his rural cousins both he and they are aware of differences in attitudes and manners. In the same way, urban institutions are inevitably affected by the peculiar stresses and demands which arise because people live in the mobile secular environment of a crowded city . . . it is not enough for the church simply to multiply its local congregations; ministers, laymen, and particularly administrators must be prepared to re-think the functions which the church should perform and methods for making it more effective.⁹

These interpretations of the face and influence of urbanization indicate the nature of the change which has and is taking place. The nature of the problem of the urban protestant church begins to become evident.

The city church usually represents a church which was once located in an attractive residential community where most of the people lived close by and owned their own homes. Its history is one of stable membership and a fairly respectable growth pattern.¹⁰ But now with its once-gathered congregation scattered, its immediate community in a state of deterioration, the construction of

⁸W. Kloetzli and A. Hillman, Urban Church Planning (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), p. 1.

⁹Murray Leiffer, The Effective City Church (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), p. 24.

¹⁰"History of Central Christian Church, Van Nuys" (Fortieth Anniversary publication, 1959).

office buildings and apartment units on every hand, it is faced with new and seemingly impossible tasks. Add to this the fact that those members remaining in the immediate community are those whose families are now grown and who represent small support to the church in leadership and finance and the picture becomes more complex and disturbing. Some of these facts would be less disturbing if the church were born in such a setting. The fact that there were "better" days for the church and that the memories of those days remain often presents a major obstacle to evaluating, re-organizing, and discovering a new mission for the church in transition. Very seldom, however, have the established denominations risked a new church venture in such an area. The pattern has been exactly the opposite, to move out, leaving the transition or deteriorating areas without any valid witness at all.

The church that chooses to stay in such a community faces many problems. The urban church looks like "a man fighting windmills" as it seeks for answers to its present condition.

One of the documents published in preparation for the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Amsterdam in 1948 declared: "There are three great areas of our world which the churches have not really penetrated. They are: Hinduism, Islam, and the culture of modern cities." In the ten years since this statement was made, no reasons for amending it have appeared. Not only has the church continued to give evidence of a radical inability to penetrate the culture of modern cities, it has largely failed to take that culture seriously.

The underlying cause, I believe, is an anti-urban bias which has become almost a point of dogma in American Protestantism. Many leading Protestants genuinely feel that a permanent and deadly hostility exists between urban man and those who are loyal to the Christian faith and ethic; that village ways of life are somehow more acceptable to God than city ways.

Biblical scholars have long appreciated the difficulty of translating the pastoral language and symbolism of the Bible, the shepherd figure of the Twenty-third Psalm and the tenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, for example, into terms that are relevant for modern town and city dwellers. But difficult does not mean impossible. Yet although there are large and ecclesiastically influential congregations of almost all the major denominations in all our principal cities, Protestantism's viewpoint remains stubbornly that of the village. As such, it has often become entangled in the suburb's and exurb's desperate attempts to reclaim synthetically the virtues of village and small-town life. The effort to modernize a pastoral religion by providing it with a split-level ranch house facade is one of the more depressing Protestant ventures of our time.¹¹

The conviction that God blesses one phase or type of life as opposed to another and newer form of life is illustrated in much of history. The security of the known and familiar is always preferred to the unknown and unfamiliar. The struggle of the Hebrew people from the nomadic life of the deserts and plains to the agricultural, settled, city life of the "promised land" is evident in much Old Testament literature. There is recorded for us the struggle of the comfortable or known past resisting new forms of culture. This struggle is not too different

¹¹Robert Lee (ed.), Cities and Churches (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 87.

from the one facing the urban church today.

The church is, of course, by nature a pilgrim community that can never be entirely at home in any settled society, a community that has "no continuing city but seeks one to come." However, it is not this which has caused the tension between it and the metropolis. The tension has arisen because Protestantism has succumbed to a peculiar form of provincialism, which it seeks to equate in a general way with "a Christian society." The society thus defined is the rural type in which American Protestantism won its most conspicuous success, and which it therefore regards as being peculiarly favorable to the preservation of "religious values."¹²

Another factor confronting the urban church is the mobility of city people. This is readily supported by the fact that all single-unit dwellings in the San Fernando Valley sell on the average of once every seven years. This constant moving about slows down the process of developing any sense of loyalty to the community or the church. The individual in a major population center tends to be a specialist in his occupation and the availability of jobs tends to affect the structure of the community, that is, professional, white collar, factory, national defense, and so forth. Areas, therefore, tend to lack a great deal of diversity and any sense of "belonging" which exists tends to do so only within the job specialty. This presents the paradox in the city church, that is, the church's greatest opportunity--a group of lonely people--is

¹²Ibid., pp. 89-90.

also its greatest failure. Due to overcrowding and the resultant depersonalization of life, the city is filled with lonely people who want to feel needed and useful and thus a part of something dynamic and important. The urban church could well fulfill this great need if it were willing and able to change established patterns.

Another problem facing the church is secularism. While it is present within the whole American life, it is seen in its most intense form in our urban communities. This general and ever increasing secularization of life stresses the need for the accumulation of property, the enjoyment of leisure, and the struggle for social acceptance. Rather than presenting dynamic alternatives to this trend, the church itself is caught up in its web. Thus persons find that the church rather than offering them a dynamic alternative to the urban culture merely reflects its life. They are as lonely in the church as on the streets. It is important that the urban church become aware of the possible negative influence of secularism on its present approach to modern, urban man. Once the church has become aware of the threat, it will see the need to find new ways of presenting valid answers and thus a new image.

The urban church has been face to face with these and other perplexing and stifling problems for many years

but it has not managed to find any lasting answers. This may be due to a reticence to confront the problems or an unwillingness to make the necessary changes in approach and program. The issue of a relevant mission to our urban communities still defies answers in most instances.

An outstanding example of such a community is Van Nuys, California. The rise of the highly organized man in the San Fernando Valley results in large-scale organization and the mass treatment of people. It is pushing into the sky. An area which once harvested fruit, and before that cattle and wheat, now features the skyscraper office building, the high-rise apartment, the tower bank, and the electronic and missile industry complex.

Many valley people look with a certain horror at this rapid process toward urbanization. Much of the individualism of the pioneers of the valley seems to be lost in the present mechanisms of bigness. One witnesses the gradual disappearance of the craftsman. People are crowded together as they have never been before, pressing in on all sides, and from above and below as well. Yet in the midst of all the hordes of people there is loneliness and separateness.

There are those who refuse to acknowledge the doom of rural ways. Thousands of persons fight in court, in commission hearings, and in their own associations to

prove over and over again to themselves that the Valley is not urban; that it is rural and should stay rural. Such efforts seem to be powerless to save the Valley from the juggernaut of urbanism.

Urbanization in the Valley pushed beyond the "old suburb" level once the World War II damper on new building was lifted in late 1945. Within a few years the Valley was a very model of the "new suburbia" of post-World War II years. It was heralded far and wide as the home of the white collar commuter to the big city, and pointed out as the bedroom of Los Angeles, the true dormitory suburb. But so fast was the population push, so great the attracting power of the Valley and its growth potentials, that the new suburbia stage was over within a few years, three or four at the most. New suburbia was dead and buried before it got its name. "Tractalia" spread its tentacles in a low profile along the land in what is called single family zoning, architecturally "California miscellaneous" until some persons began to consider that this was a permanent suburb, the eternal bedroom community.

The arrival of modern industry, principally electronics and missiles, smashed this image. With new job power the influx of people quickened until almost overnight, by 1950, the Valley found itself the twenty-fifth major city area in the United States. This marked the close of

new suburbia. although almost no one knew it had gone right through an entire phase of American city growth and was leaping to the next.

Hand in hand with this urbanization came the modern revolution in land use that saw the rise of modern industry, modern commercial developments, and an entirely urban population with all its concomitants of high educational achievement, high personal aspirations, high political sensitivity and activity.

In 1950 fifty per cent of Valley persons worked outside the area. By 1962 just under eighty per cent worked in the Valley and only twenty per cent outside. This ended the commuter element of the new suburbia approach to the Valley. As for the white collar component, the new urban Valley turned out to have a labor force far more skilled than this. Its possession of a high proportion of professional, managerial, and skilled personnel was attested to by the 1960 census, where it easily led Los Angeles city in these groupings.

The population increase in the Valley has been so phenomenal that among major cities--where so many of the structures are new, better than eighty per cent since 1950--the Valley has only one-third the national proportion of eighteen per cent dilapidated or deteriorated buildings. The "apartmentalization" process in the

Valley is so rapid that a daily question in the community is, "Where will they get the persons to fill them?" Yet the growth has not slowed down, but continues to increase.

By 1960 the Valley was the ninth city area in size in the United States; by 1962 the eighth; and by 1970 it is projected to become the sixth. Tomorrow's Valley will be, assuredly, as different from today's as it is from the poultry-raising and fruit-packing past. The electronic and missile center of the Valley now rests on a replacement of the past. The future will make the Valley even more of a neighborhood, even if it is big, but jammed, spread out, but packed together. Flux and rapid change, with the resultant insecurity, is one of the hallmarks of the process of urbanization. The Valley resident has grown to accept it.

It is a strange, new world of "massification" of people, with wonderful new opportunities for both individual and corporate experience yet to be discovered and lived. True, the air is not clean, transportation is slow, natural beauty is taking second place to concrete, but few can deny the fact that as a new skyline of towering buildings is rising problems become as metropolitan as city man.

This is a frightening pioneer view of existence, but it is one which the modern urban church must accept and

face. Ours is a highly mobile world of bigness. But, at the same time, it is a world which is finding a new kind of participation in and through the dialogue of public opinion. These masses of people have confronted the churches with the need for multiple staff ministries, and the multiple staff church in the city is now a reality which no observant person can deny. But the forces of urbanization, of loneliness, insecurity, specialization, and classification call to the church for the type of multiple staff relationship which will answer some of the gnawing needs of the urban man. Does the church in the city merely reflect the same forces which it finds in the urban culture? Is it concerned with bigness and numbers and specialization and classification? Or does it come to the city with a meaningful ministry to meet the need of man with an antidote for loneliness? This should begin on the level of staff relationship and from there spread its influence through the congregation and out into the community. Thus, while most are willing to admit that multiple staffs are now necessary due to the mere pressure of numbers, the church has yet to tackle the problem of staff relationships as the answer to other, more basic needs. It is in response to this problem that we began our experimental Team Ministry and submit this study of its dynamics.

The team ministry, as a type of multiple staff

structure, witnesses more through the relationship of the staff personnel than through any particular structure. It will be the contention of this study that the ministry's fullest potential is to be discovered in depth relationship rather than in structure. Loneliness, specialization, classification, and many additional problems of urban man can best be ministered to in a dynamic lived-out relationship. The church too often reflects the culture and thus adds to the anxiety of urban man. This study calls the ministry to depth relationship which will counteract the negative forces of urban life.

CHAPTER II

RELATIONSHIP AND STRUCTURE

I. INTRODUCTION

Niebuhr and Williams state that the ideal of the institutional church has been one of Protestantism's "most effective weapons" in meeting the many problems created by steadily advancing urbanism.¹ The problem is that the early concept of the urban church has brought us to the place where the institutional church is no different from any other institution. Even though the church has continued to grow as an institution, there is less demand today on the part of the laity for business administrators.² It will be a sad day if and when the large churches of Protestantism, with their complex problems, exalt administration above the pastoral ministry of the church. The primary call of the church is to minister and no amount of efficient administration will cover up inadequate preaching and teaching and lack of pastoral care. Efficient

¹H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (ed.), The Ministry in Historical Perspectives (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 263.

²Ibid., p. 286; and Herman J. Sweet, The Multiple Staff in the Local Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 34.

administration may build large institutions, but it cannot build the church.

The major assumption of this chapter is that one must "think of the church as an organism being composed of a highly dynamic set of relationships in which the health of any part is exceedingly significant for every other part."³

Webster defines 'organism' as follows: Biology--
 "An individual constituted to carry on the activities of life by means of parts or organs more or less separate in function but mutually dependent."
 Metaphysics--'Any thing, structure, or totality of correlative parts, in which the relationship of part to part involves a relationship of part to whole, thus making it self-inclusive and self-dependent.'
 Kant defines an organism as a material being 'which is possible only through the relation of all that is contained in it to something else as end and means.'⁴

The church, then, is a wholeness not to be considered mechanistically as though its parts had completely separate functions. This view is supported by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's view of the process of evolution. According to his view of man, evolution does not stop with the rise of consciousness but continues forward to take on a new character, that of psycho-social process. At this level the process is based on the cumulative transmission of experience in order to develop new patterns of cooperation among individuals. The growing edge of evolution then is to be discovered on the level of inter-relation and

³Sweet, op. cit., p. 29.

⁴Ibid., p. 105.

cooperation. Such inter-thinking humanity is conceived in no less organismic terms than are earlier stages of development in the evolutionary process.⁵ Thus the church, to the degree that it embodies inter-relation and shared living, is to be thought of as a dynamic organism.

The church needs to evaluate its motives for calling additional staff. Are we primarily interested in extending the institution or are we truly interested in enriching the spiritual ministry of the church? This is not to suggest the false separation of institutional matters from total ministry. The problem lies in the fact that a vast amount of new staff energy is directed toward strengthening and consolidating the status quo. This is non-productive with respect to spiritual growth. When a church faces all of the uncertainties of a period of rapid growth with an inadequate staff, it is natural to feel that with additional staff the program of the church can be regularized or brought under control. Stability is preferred over creativity if the latter suggests only more questions, more problems, more demands. The attitude is not one of experimentation and adventure in faith. Such ventures may advance the Kingdom but unsettle the church,

⁵Pierre Tielhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959). This is one of the major themes of this work.

because creativity disturbs tranquility.

On the other hand, if the concept of the church as an organism is valid, then when multiple staff is to be considered, it ought to be done only within the concept of a total ministry. Such consideration must recognize that diversity of function can be effective only within a relationship of essential unity. This is the alternative to a diversified, shattered ministry which reflects the separateness of present institutional complexity.

Another problem that faces the urban church in relation to multiple staff is that any church in a rapidly changing situation usually maintains an outmoded image of itself and its mission. Thus new staff personnel are often expected to achieve goals and purposes that are no longer desirable or even possible. A good example of this is the church in a changing community that is experiencing a steady decline in church school enrollment and youth group activities. Such a church will often continue to call a succession of assistant ministers or directors of Christian Education to attack this apparent need without any realistic adjustment in emphasis or program. Such additional staff are marked for a degree of failure almost from the start. What is needed is a careful evaluation of all of the contributing factors so that the expansion of staff will occur in such a way as to insure a deepened

total ministry. The church in such a community will do little to help itself or its witness by simply redoubling its efforts to do the same things that are already proving largely ineffective.

If our aim is a ministry to a whole, dynamic organism, we must make certain that each part is healthy and that each part is regarded as essential.

One must recognize that the ministry must be a whole ministry to a whole church and that all who minister, ordained or lay, employed or volunteer, are concerned if not in function, nonetheless in understanding, in purpose and in responsibility for the total program.⁶

The ministry, then, must be a whole ministry with each staff member reflecting a unity that is grounded in a "center" or common purpose.

Because of a general lack of understanding of the true nature of the church and its ministry, the local church often is frustrated in its attempt to set forth job descriptions. Structure is not the basic problem which plagues multiple staffs; indeed, it is impossible to establish relationship with its resultant creative possibilities by any such technique. Any church that has lived with a multiple staff for any length of time soon becomes disabused of the notion that work and responsibility can be neatly assigned and a strict division of labor maintained.

⁶Sweet, op. cit., p. 42.

Another general criticism of job descriptions is that they deal so exclusively in institutional and organizational terms, they do not define or describe "ministry." Perhaps this is impossible. But to allow any group working on job descriptions to remain at the superficial level of simply dividing up the total job without further evaluation of all that is entailed in interrelationships, in staff aptitudes and training, in dealing with leaders whose needs, interests, and responsibilities cut across the whole life of the congregation, is to stop far short of creativity and fruitfulness.⁷

Many job descriptions for an assistant are written so as to have him do all the things which the pastor does not like to do or does not do well. Any such attempt denies the possibility of a team or shared ministry from the outset. The only valid job description is one with built-in flexibility. Any creative person will outlive any static prediction of his responsibilities shortly after his ministry has begun. The addition of staff should also call for a redefinition of the pastor's responsibilities as his role is affected by such a change. Each member of the staff should have the freedom to share in a total ministry and all job descriptions should be in constant flux and under continual revision.

The fact is that the many complex problems of the urban church will not be solved by the mere addition of staff specialists. The church's attempt to pattern itself after other institutions will not bring about creative

⁷Ibid., p. 75.

solutions. There is a valid distinction to be made between organization and order. There can be good order without institutionalism. The church might lack defined organization and still be based on a good order which grows out of the nature of the church, its mission, and its discipline. Within such order based on common purpose and relationship, one finds unity.

We come back, then, to the primary concern. Are we determined to deepen the ministry or merely extend the institutional church? Are we willing to pioneer new frontiers or settle for more of the same? When we view the church as an organism, we discover that it is intensely dynamic and vibrant, interacting within itself and with the world around it. Church order might use structure but it is not synonymous with organization. Order comes from common purpose, mutual responsibility and disciplined freedom. It is based on loyalty and trust. Such order can never be imposed, but must be created by those who are set free by it and who can act responsibly within it. Christian order is reflected in mutually accepted dependence and independence. This polarity results in interdependence.

The integrity of the church as organism dictates the unity of ministry. The nature of the church as organism and the unity of ministry in and through the church

suggest that no one should be called to a particular phase of the church work to be isolated or protected in it. No one can ultimately sustain a fruitful ministry in a particular phase of church life apart from a vital relationship with all other phases. As the health of the whole depends upon the health of all the parts in this organism, so each individual ministry must be intimately related to total ministry. In light of these assumptions let us look at several types of multiple staff relationships.

II. JUNIOR - SENIOR STAFF STRUCTURE

Perhaps the most common type of multiple staff structure is that of Junior - Senior pastor. In this type of staff structure the senior pastor is in full and final control of the local church situation. He is definitely the authority, and that authority extends into every phase of the church's life. Thus the junior (or assistant) pastor generally functions within a limited framework. He is the minister's "helper," most frequently a younger man who is serving a period of apprenticeship. The senior pastor usually relegates to his assistant the work he is not able to accomplish or does not like to do or considers either less important or less prestigious and such work is ranked by parishioners as of lesser importance than the other forms of work which the senior pastor decides to perform himself.

In such a staff structure, status and power often become the basis for competition because the assistant is definitely a "second-class citizen"; such inequality is bound to produce behavior patterns which will not reflect the unity so necessary in a total ministry. It is to be noted that during this period of apprenticeship, the junior pastor is not allowed to share in a total ministry but is saddled with an endless round of necessary but endless institutional routines. When this is the case, the addition of an assistant has only increased the activity and organizational structure of the church without making a proportional contribution to spiritual depth and to the growth of persons in ministry. Both the junior pastor and the congregation become disillusioned.

When the junior pastor is young and inexperienced, the church often clings to the idea of "one head" to direct the experience of both the apprentice and the church. In such cases the tenure is not long and anticipation mounts toward the time when the assistant will have his "own" church.⁸

The main reason for holding to this type of staff structure in the church is the assumption on the part of many that business and military standards must be carried

⁸The current picture of the Disciples of Christ Churches in the Southern California area sets the average tenure of the assistant pastor at approximately 24 months.

into the church. It cannot be denied that many church people reflect this type of thinking. Someone has to be boss--it is stated--the people expect it.

That problems are involved in the junior - senior staff structure is evident in the rapid turnover of assistants. They do not stay in a local church long enough to attain their maximum effectiveness. One of the first tasks usually assigned an assistant pastor is that of recruiting teachers and leaders for the church school and youth activities. He is criticized if this is not done, with little regard for the fact that he is totally ignorant of the congregation. Successful recruiting requires a longer term ministry than the assistant usually experiences. Some reasons for this are:

First, there is usually an equal amount of education. This might not be true in the case of some part-time assistants who are involved in the process of completing their education, but if both are full-time staff persons their formal education is usually equal. Any difference is usually in age and experience. The senior pastor has had considerably more experience and, therefore, presumably has more ability to administer the affairs of a church. Thus, his will predominates.

The difference in age may lead emotionally to a father - son type of relationship. When this occurs, there

is the usual amount of advice giving and the resultant feelings of adolescent rebellion on the part of the young assistant. Communication begins to break down until the point is reached where some kind of break is inevitable and "sonny" has to leave home.

When one directs and supervises the work of the other, he tends to assume the role of authority in attitude as well as in act, and because the other often feels like an ecclesiastical "flunkey," as soon as he can arrange it, he seeks a church of his own. Persons involved in such a relationship are almost always "role conscious" and bothered by anxiety related to status which inhibits personal growth in each, and the kind of creative evaluation of the progress which motivates improvement. There is no possibility for a total ministry. When the role of an assistant is confined to certain areas of activity and program, the fact that he cannot deal creatively with any part without ultimate reference to the whole is denied. This is not to deny the possibility of a diversity of function, but the church must sense a wholeness and unity in the ministry if it is to be dynamic.

One of the most difficult senior ministers with whom to have a total ministry is one who is a successful pastor. It seems that the better the pastor is as a pastor the more difficult it often becomes to develop a satisfactory

staff situation. Such a person tends to relate himself well to all his people through preaching, pastoral care, and good contacts with boards and committees. In such a situation it is not easy to fit someone else into a total ministry because members of the congregation, and especially the leadership, do not want in any way to be cut off from the senior minister.

Another difficulty in such a staff structure is pointed up by Herman Sweet who says, "The pastor may be judged by standards of more Biblical and theological import; the assistants are judged by more institutional and secular standards."⁹ Such a dual standard of evaluation can only lead to increased tension within the staff. No matter what the depth and quality of an assistant's ministry the criteria of his success are still statistics. The church is interested in results from his ministry, tangible signs of growth--more persons, greater attendance, better finances, more activity. The church has never paused to consider Ross Snyder's distinction between growth and development.

Both are important, but in the field of religion, development is more important. Growth (as the term is precisely used in human development) means a little bit more of "what already is." "What already is" expands, adds more mass to itself--but no change of direction or center is involved. Development, on the

⁹Sweet, op. cit., p. 19.

other hand, "is more like a volcano than an unfinished brick building . . . it is the emergence of new centers out of which hot energies pour, new qualities, a new level of organization and control. And therefore it is not 'more of the same'--even though it cannot occur apart from all that already is."

Development is a matter of leaps and regressions and plateaus. It is a life "of invitation rather than command." Out of this view comes the concept of the developmental task by which we mean "some development that has to take place if the human being is to be realized in any fullness." The developmental task is such that the learner must achieve it for himself--we cannot ever determine the outcome. Development is "the creation of new life because there has been a mating of a person's experience with a seminal personality. . . . Development (and excited learning) is a mating of inner vitalities just in the process of formation with the richness of the world about--in such a way that, periodically, there are these leaps of new creation."¹⁰

It is important in our context that this basis for evaluation should be equally applied to every staff member.

Another problem which plagues the junior - senior staff is that when the pastor "turns over" to an assistant any aspect of program, he may not be able to "turn over" that portion of institutional strength at the same time. Status and power are not readily transferable from one person to another, especially in situations where they are not seen as equals. Thus, the situation arises where an

¹⁰ Ross Snyder, "Ways of Learning and Teaching" (Claremont, California: A compilation of unpublished papers for the course entitled Ways of Learning and Teaching, Summer, 1960).

assistant has the responsibility for a very heavy program load without adequate status and influence to accomplish the task.

The assistant who must work with a man who excels as an administrator rather than as a pastor has no less difficulty. The administrative pastor should come to recognize the limitations that are present in his apparently successful administration and give full support to such additional staff as might be able to work within the organizational pattern that he provides, but who have a much greater sensitivity to the way persons grow in decision making. Again, it is the problem of authority. The strong administrator discovers that members of his boards and committees are reluctant to share with the assistant in any democratic process of coming to a decision. They want to know what the "minister" thinks and despite his intentions his influence leaks into the committee. So the assistant might devote a great deal of energy to a committee decision and then have it drastically changed or dismissed by the minister or one of the "higher" boards which he administers. This is devastating both to the assistant and the laymen. The implications of the problem of authority will be discussed in a later chapter.

Administrative and supervisory effectiveness cannot

be sustained without good communication. Good communication depends upon good personal relationships. Such relationship is difficult in staff structures which try to combine the experienced with apprentice participants. They are simply not equal and this inequality is bound to lead to envy and strife. Thus the communication so necessary for such a staff to be effective is largely missing. Staff conferences are usually not the answer to honest communication in this situation since these are usually those occasions when "the experienced" gives guidance and direction to "the inexperienced."

The junior - senior staff is organized on the basis of a division of labor with each assuming responsibility for certain aspects of program, but entirely under the overall direction of the senior pastor who, in any difference of opinion, has his way. Such organization denies the church's high-sounding talk about democracy. The ministry gives great lip service to respect for personality while exploiting persons for reasons of self-satisfaction and success. Pastors are given power and praise and these have a corrupting influence in human relationships.

This type of staff organization is especially bad when one of the chief motives prompting the leadership of the church in their search for additional staff is their desire to compensate for the limitations of the pastor.

The calling of an assistant does not solve the problems of the pastor but often points out his weaknesses. When this occurs, dissatisfaction grows. This feeling that something is wrong does not center at first on the senior pastor who is accepted and established. It more than likely centers on the assistant. So we have the common situation of a pastor who is not quite able to lead a multiple staff, serving a congregation that is vainly seeking to solve its problems in a succession of assistant staff changes. The real issue, which is seldom faced, is the inadequacy in the view that the total ministry is represented in the pastor and those who support him. Such a view leads to a consequent disorder in the life of the organism.

In terms of salary structure it should be noted that the full-time assistant usually receives about one-half the total compensation of the senior minister.¹¹ Of course this does vary but it tends to be close to the average. The base salaries do not show quite this degree of differential, but the senior pastors are usually compensated with larger housing and car allowances, greater pension and retirement benefits as well as convention expenses.

¹¹"Salary Survey, Christian Churches of Southern California" (Prepared by The Department of the Ministry, 1962-1963).

Again, this inequality in salaries and benefits only reflects the actual inequality within the junior - senior staff structure.

In the junior - senior relationship the basic insecurity that plagues both pastor and assistant is often in the lack of any common ground for teamwork. The unilateral action and other violations of the proper lines of communication and procedure, which are permissible or tolerated when the pastor works alone, simply cannot continue if there is to be a meaningful multiple staff relationship. The delegation of responsibility means, first of all, an understanding of what that responsibility is. This means that more attention will have to be given to setting and interpreting policy, establishing the order within which responsibility may be intelligently assigned and confidently accepted. This will lessen the tension, but many of the problems which result from the dynamics discussed in the junior - senior staff structure will remain to limit its effectiveness.

III. SPECIALIZED GROUP MINISTRY

Another type of staff structure that is common among the larger churches is the specialized group ministry. Niebuhr and Williams write:

If the modern church is affluent enough ministerial specialists will be employed not only in religious

education but also in pastoral care and other areas while the chief minister concerns himself primarily with preaching and the administration of the sizeable institution and staff. The local church today is larger, more complex, and more highly organized than a century ago. The minister must have administrative ability. The danger exists that ministers become so specialized and so involved in administrative detail that they lose contact with the people. This is the experience of business, industry, and education as they become more complex.¹²

This type of group ministry is supported by Herman Sweet of the United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. He feels that

we must experiment with a group ministry in which diversity of function is based upon the solid foundation of commonly understood and accepted purposes; a well-defined doctrine of the church, and deeply Christian attitudes toward service and toward persons.¹³

He agrees with Niebuhr and Williams that "there should be a 'chief of staff.'"¹⁴ Thus the specialized group ministry would be such that there would be a "chief of staff" who administered the total program of the church, but delegated responsibility in the separate areas of the church's life to specialists.

In reviewing the backgrounds of those involved in

¹²Niebuhr and Williams, op. cit., p. 286.

¹³Herman J. Sweet, "Some Thoughts Concerning Multiple Staffs in Churches" (Los Angeles, California: A paper prepared for The Board of Christian Education of The United Presbyterian Church, 1959), p. 6.

¹⁴Sweet, The Multiple Staff . . . , p. 108.

specialized ministries it is found that on the average their experience and education are comparable but in specialized areas of ministry.¹⁵ Their ages, on a given staff, are usually similar, but of course there are wide variances in particular situations.

In this type of staff structure the relationship of the staff persons is different from that in the junior - senior type ministry. There tends to be a greater degree of sharing among the staff since each is considered the "expert" in his field, but still the final decision most often rests with the "chief of staff."

This type of staff structure is based on the concept of a unified ministry with a diversity of function. As has already been pointed out, the people are more willing to accept such diversity in function when they are able to sense a wholeness or a unity in the total ministry. It is to be remembered, however, that any such diversity risks the "atomizing" effects of institutional complexity and pressures.

The attempt within the specialized group ministry is to base their diversity of function upon solid foundations and mutually understood centers. This is certainly a step beyond the junior - senior multiple staff structure.

¹⁵Benjamin Torres, Jr., "The Ordained Multiple Staff Ministry in Community-Centered Congregational Churches of Southern California" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Southern California School of Theology, Claremont, California, 1959).

However, if a total ministry is to be achieved, then their relationship must go beyond the level of specialized structure and job descriptions. More time will have to be spent in planning, working together, sharing some tasks, alternating others until a common spirit and mind is developed which will insure the possibility that their ministry will reflect unity. Simply dividing the ministry and staying out of each other's way is no answer to a total ministry.

Also, one ought to note that it is possible that the specialists on a staff might agree to a common purpose and center but lack a feeling of mutuality. When this is the case, trouble begins. Then the same competing type of ministry is evident which so often characterizes the junior - senior multiple staff. Ministers on a specialized staff may actually be competing for the attention and loyalty of persons. To avoid this, staff relationships must be developed which will open the way for all members of the church family to relate to the whole staff. It should be noted that this is difficult in spite of the intentions of the staff, due to the nature of specialized or diversified ministries.

It is impossible to separate institutional matters from total ministry. There should be no titles that define functions. This tends to limit and fix the ministry. There is no validity to our implying that the director of education has his own constituency.

May I digress here to say that I am sure that it is generally a mistake to call an assistant as 'Youth Worker' or as 'Children's Worker' and to so designate him or her on the staff. I begin to have grave doubts about the advisability of labeling ministers as 'ministers of evangelism' or of 'visitation' or what not, as if the pastor were not all of these things, or if these were somewhat specialized and separated functions of the church. I even begin to doubt the value of the title 'minister or director of Christian Education.' We had better begin to think of a group ministry in which out of unity of spirit, and of purpose, out of clearly defined policy, out of commonly accepted purposes and intelligently diversified assignments of responsibility, persons can function freely according to ability and training and the needs most evident in the life of the congregation.¹⁶

This problem of the specialized ministry is evidenced not only in job titles but also in job descriptions. It is a mistake to maintain a strict division of labor over a long period of time. How can a pastor be unrelated to the Christian Education program over a long period of time? Such over-specialization often overlooks the creative possibilities in alternating into new areas of responsibility. This is not to suggest that real talents and special abilities are overlooked, but to cast any one of the ministers into a certain permanent role may restrict his ministry, prevent the development of new skills, and be a disservice to the congregation. Every staff member's responsibilities change from time to time. This is true of the "chief of staff" as well. Thus all job descriptions

¹⁶Sweet, "Some Thoughts . . .," pp. 3-4.

should be flexible and constantly changing. It is often true in long-established multiple staff situations that crystallization of the categories of work is a deterrent to creativity.

Within the urban church it is no longer as easy as in the former rural setting to divide program areas and run them as loosely-associated aspects of total program. The needs of urban man dictate a different answer. In the city, man is often torn apart by specialization. No one evidences a concern for his total being. Persons get involved in the church program in different ways and we forget the need to deal with them as whole persons and not as segments of personalities. When the city man has a sore foot, he goes to a foot specialist who is not concerned with anything but the feet. This is one of the weaknesses of the specialized ministry. Persons are often treated as if they were multiple personalities with one staff specialist dealing with them in one way, another in another. This only subjects persons to competing pressures which increase the tensions and frictions of complex city living. Thus the church, rather than confronting modern man with the call to wholeness and unity, becomes an instrument of further destruction

When it comes to compensations, there is no complete equality. Such a specialized ministry, which is

based on the divisions so common to the junior - senior type of structure, has to fight against the notion in the common churchman's mind that there are levels to the ministry. The Christian Education specialist is never quite equal to the Pastor in the peoples' minds, equal experience and education notwithstanding. This is often reflected in differences in salaries and benefits.

In most cases persons become disabused of the notion that work and responsibility can be neatly assigned and a strict division of labor maintained with rigidity over a long period of time. The problem with the specialized group ministry is that the unity and purpose so necessary for total ministry is weakened by the emphasis on special function. Even when there is common acceptance of purpose, but mutual relationship is lacking, the specialized ministry is bound for trouble. Without such relationship there can be no honest communication and co-operation turns to competition.

III. TEAM MINISTRY

The team approach to the ministry is not so much a type of structure as it is a relationship between or among staff personnel. In such a "co-ministry" each person's uniqueness is maintained, yet there is an overlapping of performance and responsibility in all of the general

ministerial duties. In such a relationship there is no attempt to deny special talents and abilities but the term "specialist" is never used to describe any functional part of such a shared ministry.

It will have to be admitted from the outset that every person in the ministry will not be able to function creatively and freely within the team concept.

The entire concept of a team ministry depends upon the ability of a mature congregation to accept two or more ministers on an equal basis and the ability of the two or more ministers to accept the variety of uneven responses and expressions of diverging loyalties of the members with Christian grace.¹⁷

Thus there is the need for maturity and security on the part of the participants if this "form" of ministry is to be creative and free. In terms of success or failure, therefore, especially when judged in worldly or institutional terms, the ministers and the congregation must be willing to accept negative results in terms of their own lack of maturity. To do otherwise would be a denial of the dynamic of relationship.

Such a relationship can exist only when the participants share in a commonly understood and accepted purpose. It depends on mutual trust, love, and

¹⁷ W. W. Carpenter and James W. Pierson, "Introduction to a Team Ministry" (An original typed document to introduce team ministry concept to Central Christian Church, Van Nuys, California, 1961). Included in this dissertation as Appendix I.

understanding which become the basis for valid communication. This type of deep communication is characterized by a common language (a "family language"). In order for such a "family language" to evolve, the relationship of staff personnel should be established before a "shared" ministry is attempted. It must readily be admitted that there are many types of personalities which cannot live or function in such a relationship. To "force" such a person into a team ministry simply because his past achievement has earned him the status to serve in a large multi-staff church, is to do damage to him as well as the congregation involved. Also to be taken into account is the fact of individual preference and personality clash. Certain personalities are drawn together in such a way that each supports the other, opening all sorts of creative resources within the individuals involved. On the other hand, certain personalities clash and close off the creative resources in each other. How is the local church to know which process will characterize its staff beforehand unless some relationship is established which already evidences freedom and creative response? Such a pre-established relationship is a guard against the possibility of inter-personal conflict and strife. It also provides the staff with the opportunity for arriving at a common expression of the purposes and principles upon which their shared ministry will be built.

In establishing such a relationship as much attention must be given to the staff wives and families. "In an evaluation of staff relationships, the attitudes and the influence of wives is often the most important 'hidden' factor."¹⁸ The level of relationship involved in the team ministry requires family living and sharing, which in turn depends on the trust and acceptance of the entire family unit. Good relationship between the ministers is not enough to insure success if envy and strife characterize the involvement of their wives and families. Opportunities for sharing, living, and growing together must be provided. Differences must be faced, as must negative feelings and responses. Only in this way can such a ministry function.

An important step to be considered in the establishment of the team concept of ministry is how the local church people are to be prepared for a new type of staff relationship. How do we help the local congregation to understand the basic issues involved in staff relations, colored as they are by popular images of ministry and misunderstandings of the nature of the church? Most persons in the local church (and this was true of Van Nuys Central Christian) expect a staff structure that is patterned after the business world, one in which the "line of authority"

¹⁸Sweet, The Multiple Staff, p. 82.

is clearly evident. Our attempt was to educate the local church through a series of meetings in which James Parrott, the Executive Secretary of the Christian Churches of Southern California, and Frank Kimper, the Supervisor of Professional Experience at the School of Theology at Claremont would interpret a document setting forth the principles of a team ministry.¹⁹ These meetings began with the pulpit committee and expanded through the normal lines of authority, the administrative cabinet, the official board, and ultimately the entire congregation. Frank Kimper based this educational introduction on these remarks:

In any case the same considerations are pertinent which apply to the selection of any minister--senior, associate, or co-minister--and that is the quality of the persons themselves, their long-range vision of the church's aims, their spiritual depth, their breadth of understanding of human need, and their common-sense approach to the practical problems of administration that is necessary to make steady progress toward the achievement of ultimate goals. No organizational plan indicating the specific nature of relationships between pastors will ever preclude the necessity for quality persons. So it seems to me your main focus of concern must still be on the personalities and capabilities of the persons available rather than on an organizational concept, per se, for in the last analysis it will be the personalities involved which will determine the success or failure of whatever plan is followed.

However, I do think the co-ministry type of relationship is definitely superior to the senior-associate

¹⁹Carpenter and Pierson, op. cit.

type of relationship in that it eliminates the emotional tensions that inevitably lead to a steady turnover of associates, and promotes the kind of long-standing relationship which is creative.²⁰

In turning to the background of the ministers involved it should be noted that each has had comparable experience. The uniqueness is that their views are "pooled" and ideas are projected which result from their mutual struggle to discover what is best in the present situation. Also, they have an equal amount of formal education and are close to the same age.²¹

The relationship that characterizes the shared ministry is dynamic rather than static. It involves risk. The minute the attempt is made to structure the relationship, the "Thou" becomes an "It" again even as it is objectified.²² Two or more persons share with each other and with the congregation in a cooperative effort to grow in the knowledge and grace of God. The feeling of equality eliminates anxiety about status, and encourages that kind of mutuality which permits critical evaluation and creative growth in the pastors themselves as well as

²⁰Frank Kimper, A letter to Mr. Scott Ludlow, Elder of Central Christian Church, Van Nuys, February 17, 1961.

²¹Carpenter and Pierson, op. cit.

²²Martin Buber, Writings (New York: Meridian, 1958), p. 49.

in the programs for which they share responsibility. Such a relationship places its emphasis upon development rather than growth, growth being just a little bit more of what already is while development is the emergence of new hot-centers out of which new energies flow. When a relationship is thus grounded, it must be readily admitted that outcomes can in no way be determined or structured beforehand. Nor does such a relationship eliminate any sense of responsibility. Rather, it is based on O. W. Holmes' conviction that a person must be willing to risk his life over a truth which tomorrow he may be willing to revise. Only in this way can the proper balance between openness and commitment be maintained, as well as the distinct identity of each staff person. This is central to the level of relationship involved in a shared ministry. Ministers must be satisfied that they hold a mutual understanding of each other's perspective even though they do not share exactly the same points of view. Valid relationship never requires the participants to lose their distinctiveness nor distort their identity in terms of the other. When relationship is admittedly dynamic, tensions are inevitable but they are tensions which lead to genuine development as personal differences are honestly faced and worked through on the basis of mutuality.

In any staff structure communication is of primary

importance, but "the Spirit of relationships determines the nature of communication."²³ Thus verbage is not to be confused with true communication. Oftentimes great verbal facility is a sign that the verbal motor is not in gear with where the person is developing but rather is driven by the need to avoid confrontation. Every person involved in dialogical encounter evidences the tendency to seek the formal and avoid vital confrontation and development. "Communication is not the offspring of speech, but its parent."²⁴ Nor is communication to be confused with staff meetings. Such staff encounters, which are often burdened down with "administrivia," leave little time for the mutual give and take that characterizes real relationship. In the team relationship few days should pass without some valid communication, evidenced by real sharing at the feeling level, common study and planning. Such communication gives rise to the degree of predictability with regard to each other's feelings and responses. Such predictability about each other is necessary to an effective shared ministry.

Recognizing, then, that communication has its roots

²³Reuel Howe, Man's Need and God's Action (Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury Press, 1955), p. 75.

²⁴John Macmurray, Persons in Relation (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 67.

in relationship, some philosophy of communication is needed. The basis for the importance of communication is the desire to commune, to break out of isolation and experience the fulfillment of self with others. Staff persons need to work at this level of communication, for it includes being able to catch significant strands of feeling and to try to understand why each feels as he does. At this deep level communication involves both "honest revelation" and "honest listening." Then both subjects (participants) have a feeling that in some sense an act of creation has taken place between them--"a world," however brief its existence, has taken shape and enveloped both of them. Communication is central because the elements of our inner region (ideas, images, meanings, purposes) cannot be fired at other persons like bullets or poured into them as through a funnel. They must be shared. This involves an openness which brings about and is based upon trust. Only in this atmosphere of confidence and trust is the participant able to enter into such a deep level of conversation. Each staff member must feel that he is sharing with "my kind of people," persons who do not continually overwhelm him. When one is in such a relation, his self-concept feels alive and expanded, not shrinking and closing in on him. This level of conversation requires each participant to respect the other as a

person of infinite worth and in a "mode of acceptance." The "mode of acceptance" does not mean approval. This distinction is important to the communicating process for it makes it possible to face the fact that the participants are different from each other and indeed disagree with each other. However, this awareness is accompanied by a great appreciation for the other as a worthwhile individual. Often it is this interest in another who is different from oneself--the "lure of valence"--that brings about initial openness. At this level of communication, each participant affirms that this other is in charge of his own life, and that it is good that it is this way. They grant to each other the privilege of functioning with integrity. Thus each member of the staff has an integrity with which the other can communicate and live, rather than just observe.²⁵

Such inter-staff relationship and the resultant communication is important because it sets the tone for the entire congregation. If the fundamental purpose of a trained staff is to create a responding, worshipping, nurturing, and witnessing community, and not simply to manage a successful institution, then their relationship to their congregation is crucial. It is readily admitted

²⁵Terms used and general concept of communication are expressed in part by excerpts from Ross Snyder's unpublished materials.

that the staff cannot single-handedly carry on the service which is the church's vocation within the complex demands of the rising industrial and urban society.²⁶ This takes the witnessing of both lay and ordained, and acceptance of this fact is evidenced in the current rise of the lay ministry within American Protestantism. This being true, we need to be aware of the fact that the relation of the ordained staff to lay volunteers and of lay ministers to one another is always affected, in many subtle and direct ways, by the relationships among the staff. If the staff relationship is characterized by disunity or specialization, thus reflecting the urban culture in which it finds itself, then the lay minister will evidence this same spirit which denies a total approach to ministry. On the other hand, if staff relations based on the concept of church as organism, reveal a spirit of unity, then the lay ministry will reflect a total ministry to the community. When the laity come to know that each staff member is a channel to every other staff member whose particular leadership or ministry meets their needs because of a wholeness in their concept of ministry, then the lay participant will also come to see his witness in terms of the totality of life. Then the church is able to

²⁶Niebuhr and Williams, op. cit., p. 266.

operate as a dynamic organism, free from inner strife and competition between the various phases of its functional structure.

In turning our attention to the organization involved in the team ministry, it is to be remembered that relationship is always primary. The co-ministry is characterized by a division of labor, with each pastor assuming responsibility for certain aspects of the program on a rotating basis which allows for creativity and new vitality to be shared in all phases of the church's life. Underlying this "division of labor" is the mutual sharing of insights in reaching agreement on purposes and overall strategy for achieving them. Such common purpose becomes a mutually-shared working philosophy, a common approach that is open to continual evaluation through the uninhibited and regular exchange of feelings and ideas.

Such organization as is necessary to maintain order in any multiple staff is directed toward interpreting to the congregation the equality which the staff members reflect in their understanding of and relationship to each other. All ministers are made responsible to the same board, in our case the Board of Elders. This is different from the staff in which the chief of staff is held responsible to the board of elders while all other staff are responsible to the chief of staff or to subservient

boards or committees. All organization in the team structure is directed toward the establishment of order and equality without the resultant institutionalism which so often accompanies it.

The key concept in terms of organization is flexibility. This finds expression in job descriptions which avoid a definite assignment of duties since these change over a period of time. Job descriptions ought to reflect a commonly accepted belief in a growing, creative, total ministry. Such flexibility calls for continued interpretation of this concept of total ministry, both among staff members and between staff and layman. In their relation to each other the team ministry runs the same risk of having a busy schedule crowd out opportunities for such continued interpretation as does any other multiple staff structure. In its relation to the laity the team ministry needs to accept the fact that many will slip back into their former concepts of ministry and church, and others will not understand readily the constant shifting of roles so necessary if a total ministry is to be shared by two or more persons living in a relationship that is characterized by flexibility. Regularly scheduled times for evaluation and interpretation should be set aside in order to assure that this growing process does occur. In addition to such opportunity as a shared ministry needs to

experience daily, because the team concept was new it seemed important to set aside a period of time at the end of three years at Van Nuys Central Christian for a detailed evaluation and reinterpretation of the team concept of ministry. We are at present involved in this process and this dissertation reflects some of the insights gained in the course of our three years in the team ministry.

In planning the organization necessary to the team ministry, we need to look at our projections with regard to additional staff. This is important if we are to avoid becoming a "two-headed" senior pastor who is involved in the hiring of a rapid succession of associates. The difficulty of a new staff person entering into a staff structure that is based on such a deep level of relationship, must be squarely faced. The longer a ministry, indeed two lives, are shared the more difficult such an addition becomes. Nonetheless, due to the nature of the team ministry projected additional staff must be in our thinking.

When a full-time person is added to the ministerial staff, he becomes a part of the ministerial unit, and is to be considered on an equal with the existing staff. However, several requirements need to be mentioned in addition to those already indicated: (a) A minister joining the staff will begin at the same salary as the present staff members now receive. After his arrival, salary raises are to be commensurate with those given the other ministers. (b) Due to the relationship and rapport within the ministerial

staff that is required for an effective team ministry, any new additions must be acceptable to the existing ministerial staff first. However, the final acceptance of such a person rests with the congregation.²⁷

The attempt here is to assure the concept of a total ministry, shared by equals in a team relationship of mutual trust.

Due to the fact that the team ministry is a total ministry shared in by equals, all salaries and compensations are equal.²⁸ In addition to this, our policy has been to put all "outside" fees into a common account which is administered by the entire ministerial staff with equal portions going to each. Thus competition for outside services that result in monetary gain is avoided. There is never the question as to which staff member should be involved in rendering such service since each is recognized as an equal participant in a full ministry. The recipient of the ministerial service never has the feeling that he is shut off from "the" minister of the church.

The question which is raised with regard to the team concept time and again is the problem of authority. "Have administrative difficulties seriously hampered your ministry? Does the absence of one authority figure confuse the people so far as knowing to whom they should go in some

²⁷Carpenter and Pierson, op. cit.

²⁸Ibid.

administrative matter?"²⁹ Due to the importance of authority with regard to relationship, a later chapter will be devoted to the concept of authority in the team ministry.

As one views the church as organism, the type of multiple staff structure that places dynamic relationship before structure begins to make sense. It involves one in a constant risk, but only such risk gives forth bursts of creativity and energy. Gertrude Stein writes, "You cannot go into the womb to form the child; it is there and makes itself and comes forth whole--and there it is and you have made it and felt it, but it has come itself."³⁰

²⁹Fred T. Hall, Fort Worth, Texas; a letter to the Team Ministry, March 22, 1963.

³⁰Ross Snyder, "Ministry to Youth" (Claremont, California: a compilation of unpublished papers for the course entitled A Ministry to Youth, Summer, 1960).

CHAPTER III

RELATIONSHIP: A PRIMARY INGREDIENT

The life of the urban pastor within and without the multiple staff can be characterized by the word loneliness. The complexities of the tasks of the church, the necessity for "prophetic witness," the fear of the congregation with regard to any deep involvement, the growing trend toward impersonal living, stand as the sentinel reasons for the widespread feelings of loneliness, apartness, and frustration in the urban clergy. He finds himself faced not only with the frustrations of a seemingly impossible task, but also with a growing inability to cope with his personal feelings of lostness and loneliness. The more qualified or self-sufficient he appears, the greater his feelings of loneliness tend to be. This is due to the fact that the congregation tends to come to the pastor only to receive, and any thought of giving or sharing seems foreign. It thus becomes increasingly easy for the clergyman to be "alone in the crowd."

Many thoughtful observers of the Protestant ministry today have been struck by the loneliness of the typical minister. Unless he has a close personal friend who is also a minister, and who lives near enough to be readily accessible, he has no fellow man with whom to discuss the many problems of the ministry.¹

¹"Share Your Problems," Pulpit Digest, XXXIX

In a popular article by Wesley Shrader, which appeared in Life, it was said that the impossible ministerial role is a major contributory factor in the emotional breakdown and disillusionment of ministers.² Others have listed such problems as the restrictive personal life, repression of true self in favor of an image, unresolved conflicts with authority, and the inability really to feel deeply involved in life.

Niebuhr also finds that many of the failures in the ministry go beyond ignorance of and ineptness in handling organizational problems to failures in personal relationships.³

It is against the backdrop of this current problem, within the life of the Church and particularly within the life of clergymen, that the following ideas are presented.

The key word or primary ingredient of this study, and indeed of vital living, is relationship. A quick glance at this word, however, might raise the question, "What is so important about relationship?" Obviously, we are in relationship to everyone and everything. Yet for
(September, 1958), 33.

²Wesley Shrader, "Why Ministers Are Breaking Down," Life, XLI (August 20, 1956), 95-104.

³H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel D. Williams, and James M. Gustafson, The Advancement of Theological Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 106.

anyone, and especially a clergyman, to assume relationship is to deny a force which can work an alchemy in all phases of life. It is our experience and thesis that in the shared ministry (or team ministry) the feelings of loneliness, and the frustrations resulting from these feelings, can be so neutralized that a greater freedom for creative thinking and shared insights is possible. This fact is the stimulus which can cause the alchemy and serve as the platform for a deeper and richer ministry to people.

Man stands in need of relationship. Any individual who exists without some feeling of relationship to another is a "marginal man."⁴ Such a person will experience uncertainties regarding his individual worth which will lead him to extremes of behavior and often to the dissolution of his integrity. Often his uncertainty will lead him to a succession of social roles which he hopes will gain him recognition and status. His intense need to feel acceptance and a sense of worthfulness will drive him to various behavior patterns in search of fulfillment. However, it is only in relationship that man can experience

⁴Ross Snyder, "Ministry to Youth" (Claremont, California: a compilation of unpublished papers for the course entitled A Ministry to Youth, Summer, 1960). Marginal man is defined as a person who is not sure of his place.

a "birthing of the ontological."⁵ Because of the depth of the total being of a person, it is not possible for a life of meaning to exist apart from a life of relationship. In such relationships, characterized by depth involvement, man encounters the real core of the other, the world of the other, which includes his thoughts, feelings, needs, fears, hopes, questions, and so forth. Such an experience or relationship involves mutual perception, understanding, and intimacy.

At this point, a broad definition of relationship must be attempted. This is, however, very difficult because relationship is dynamic and not static. Any definition of relationship must apply to a specific time and place and in the very defining the dynamic is lost. The best distinction might be seen in the following bisection of meanings. There are positive and negative relationships, that is, relationships which build and relationships which destroy. The negative pole of relationship is expressed in the word "apart," which means distance and separation. The positive side of relationship is seen in the phrase "a part," which denotes participation and involvement. Paul Tournier, in his book The Meaning of Persons, gives an unforgettable picture of the self apart

⁵A phrase often used by Ross Snyder and used here because of its relevance and poetic force.

from positive relationship. He speaks of the continual camouflage in which society indulges and says,

I cannot board a trolley-bus without feeling an urge to offer up a silent prayer at the sight of all those people packed together, eyeing each other by appearances, calculating their chances and trying to keep themselves in countenance.⁶

Ross Snyder discovers that Martin Buber relates the same feeling when Buber writes,

The mistrust between man and man has become existential, it is no longer only the uprightness, the honesty of the other which is in question, but the inner integrity of his existence itself. (that is, he doesn't know what is moving him and at best he is an episodic succession of colliding forces, not an integrity) This mistrust not only destroys trustworthy talk between opponents, but also the immediacy of togetherness of man and man. Seeing-through and unmasking is now becoming the great sport between men . . . this game naturally only becomes complete as it becomes reciprocal, in the same measure as the unmasker himself becomes the object of unmasking. Hence one may foresee in the future a degree of reciprocity in existential mistrust where speech will turn into dumbness and sense into madness. . . . The existential mistrust is indeed basically no longer . . . a mistrust of my fellow-men. It is rather the destruction of confidence in existence in general.⁷

All this leads us into the center of one of the current problems facing the church--impersonal detachment from life. Yet it is interesting to note that the very flight from involvement, from depth relationships, drives us into a despair which causes us to reach and grope for

⁶Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 31.

⁷Snyder, op. cit.

relationships. Our search for meaning through non-participation leads us ultimately to participation.

Ross Snyder proclaims that "to feel is the last freedom a human being has."⁸ The new forms of person pathology have a heavy component of the loss of power to feel and to experience one's self. Individuals become objects and so do all other persons. Only feeling gives us mountains and valleys, and not merely boring flat-lands or plateaus. The only way to discover the depth of life is through feeling, experiencing one's self, knowing "I am," and this can be done only in relationship to other persons.

Martin Buber makes a radical distinction between the two basic attitudes, the two fundamental types of relation, of which men are capable, expressed in the "primary words" I-Thou and I-It (understood as referring not to the object of the relation, but to the nature of the relation itself). The "primary word" I-Thou points to a relation of person to person, of subject to subject, a relation of reciprocity involving "meeting" or "encounter," while the "primary word" I-It points to a relation of person to thing, of subject to object, involving some form of utilization, domination, or control, even if it is only so-called "objective" knowing. The I-Thou relation, which Buber usually designates as "relation" par excellence, is one in which man can enter only with the whole of his being, as a genuine person. It is a relation, incidentally, which Buber feels it is possible for men to have not only with human beings, but also with nature and "intelligible forms" (art), thus recalling

⁸Ross Snyder, "Group Dynamics" (Claremont, California: a special paper prepared for course entitled Ways of Learning and Teaching, Summer, 1960), p. 2.

William James' comment that the "religious man" sees the universe as a "Thou," The I-It relation, on the other hand, is one that man enters not with the wholeness of his being, but only with a part of it; in this relation, he is not really a person but an individual. The "I" in the two relations is thus not really the same; "the I of the primary word I-Thou is a different I from the primary word I-It." There is still another distinction of importance: in the I-Thou relation, the relation itself is primary and underived; not so in the I-It relation, where the components, so to speak, precede the relation, and the relation is secondary.

. . . It is in the I-Thou relation that the person in his authentic personality emerges: Through the Thou a man becomes an I. The primal reality, in which man receives his real being, is the Zwischenmenschliche, the "between man and man." The self is "social" by nature; its very "essence" is interpersonal.⁹

This extended quotation can thus serve as the backdrop of our understanding of Martin Buber's insistence in the importance of relationship and its need for life, if it is to be lived in the present. Buber insists also that the basis for relationship is not dual but triadic--the self, God, and the "other." "Real relationship with God cannot be achieved on earth if real relationships to the world and mankind are lacking,"¹⁰ but real relationship with other human beings is possible only in terms of real relationship to God.

⁹Martin Buber, Writings (New York: Meridian, 1958), pp. 14-15.

¹⁰Martin Buber, At the Turning: Three Addresses on Judaism (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Young, 1952), p. 39.

In turning to the "I-Thou" relationship we mean one in which we feel that we are not alien to each other; in fact we are in communion. In the same instant we recognize the "otherness" of the other person, we develop a sense of intimate contact with the core of his life. Each of us is a center that cannot be utterly absorbed by the other. In this type of relationship we are not related to an object, but to another subject--an inner consciousness struggling to make its way in this world. In this depth encounter we discover someone or something we live "with" rather than "alongside." Such a meeting cannot be adequately described; both feel that somehow they are in the presence of "the Holy." Real life becomes the lived moment of relationship with another. "God's purpose is such, and He so made humanity in accordance with that purpose, that He never enters into a personal relationship with a man apart from other human persons."¹¹

A recognition of the essential nature of the "I-Thou" relationship did not begin with Martin Buber. Nicolas Berdyaev thought of encounter as the creative substance of the Christian life. "The 'I-Thou' essence of personality is only found in loving contact with other

¹¹H. H. Farmer, The Servant of the Word (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), p. 37.

personalities."¹² William James spoke of our yearning to approach and to be vindicated by the universe not as an "I" but as a "Thou." Soren Kierkegaard took as a theme the fact that man could not be an individual except in relation to a redemptive community in which the struggle of the self was the pilgrimage of the religious person. It was encounter that characterized the relationship of Jesus to others and to God. According to the New Testament Zacchaeus and Nicodemus saw themselves as worthwhile persons for the first time and they began to change because they had been encountered by an "I" that could, without limitation, meet them as "Thou." Philosophic or religious, truth has a personal character. It arises not out of the speaking of certainty to certainty, but from the encounter of open minds.

We expect a theophany of which we know nothing but the place, and the place is called community. There is no single God's Word which can be clearly known and advocated, but the words delivered are clarified for us in the human situation of being turned to one another.¹³

The "given," says Paul Tournier, is the urge toward synthesis that compels us to seek a common factor in the successive images that are other persons.

¹²Nicolas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), p. 31.

¹³Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 7.

. . . assisted by this apparently objective inquiry, something of a quite different order takes place, almost without our being aware of it. There is established . . . a bond of sympathy and affection, the fruit, in fact of our sincerity the one toward another. There suddenly awakens within me the certainty that I am no longer learning, but understanding. It is quite different. It is not the sum of what I have learnt. It is a light which has suddenly burst forth from our personal contact.¹⁴

Man's struggle to find meaning, which leads to the road of relationship, brings him to what Buber calls "the between man and man," but also, as we have said, into "the between man and God." God is thus the Eternal Thou in whom "the extended lines of relation meet." "Every particular Thou is a glimpse through to the Eternal Thou; by means of every particular Thou, the primary word addresses the Eternal Thou."¹⁵

. . . the I-It relation must remain subordinate; it is the predominance, not the mere existence, of the I-It that is the source of evil. Without it man cannot live; but he who lives with It alone is not a man . . . all real living is meeting.¹⁶

If, as Buber asserts, "all real living is meeting," then life without relationships (encounter, meeting) is but a form of existence. The meaning of life and the potential of the existential moment are hidden from mere

¹⁴Tournier, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁵Martin Buber, I and Thou (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 78.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 34.

existence. It is not strange then that the "hidden" life produces frustrations and doubts regarding the meaning and nature of life itself. It is only in relation that this void has any hope of creative growth. God has given us not only the need for, but the ability to find, relationship.

God's gift of relationship with Him and with one another, with all that it promises of fulfillment is denied us by our sin. We can understand this sin as being our assertion that we are sufficient of ourselves, that we do not need relationship with God or man.¹⁷

Even beyond this, our anxious desire for our own being keeps us from finding our being in God and in our relations with one another. We come to fear and suspect one another, as was previously stated, and in order to protect ourselves we inflict pain and hurt. However, "we exploit not only persons (each other) but things, so that both the world of persons and the world of things become the instruments of our self-destruction."¹⁸

This pull to self-destruction through selfishness has become so strong that even our religion, our individual ministries, and our religious observances can and do become agents of alienation and death.

¹⁷Reuel Howe, Man's Need and God's Action (Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury Press, 1955), p. 33.

¹⁸Ibid.

Even the bread and wine of our salvation (the Lord's Supper) can become the bread and wine of our own ego-centric shattering of love and peace, and our altars can be altars of separation rather than altars of reunion of that which is separated.¹⁹

Erich Fromm wrote, "destructiveness is the outcome of unlived life."²⁰ Every experience in our lives and the lives of our people has in it the possibilities for alienation, destruction, and death as well as of reconciliation, fulfillment, and life. "Every human situation is one in which there is tension between life and death."²¹ Reuel Howe says that "the issue is not life or death, but life and death,"²² which indicates that our situation is never so good that we are not victims of demonic forces working both in us and on us, nor so bad that there is not the possibility of life and redemption.

It is important to note that the Neo-Freudians have helped us understand how interpersonal relationships have both made and warped man. They have pointed out that it is the quality of a relationship that determines whether it shall be destructive or healing to our being. That is, there is an important difference to the well-being of a

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Seward Hiltner, Self-Understanding (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 174. Quotes Erich Fromm from which this quotation is taken.

²¹Howe, op. cit., p. 49.

²²Ibid., p. 49.

person expressed in terms of a mutual relationship as opposed to a selfish relationship. This is precisely the difference between Buber's I-Thou and I-It.

The next step is the affirmation of a corresponding truth relative to the need for relationship not only in persons but also in community. A protest against the rising trend toward depersonalization and "thingification" through the dominance of the "I-It" at the expense of true relationships takes on particular relevance. True community, according to Buber and contemporary writers of Christian literature, emerges out of the I-Thou.

Just as the individual becomes a person, a "fact of existence" insofar as he steps into a living relation with other individuals, so does a social aggregate become a community insofar as it is built out of living units of relation. . . . Only men who are capable of truly saying Thou to one another can truly say We with one another.²³

The true community does not arise through people having feelings for one another (though indeed not without it), but first, through their taking their stand in living mutual relation with a living center, and second, their being in living mutual relation with one another. The second has its course in the first, but is not given when the first alone is given. . . . The community is built up out of living mutual relation, but the builder is the living effective center.²⁴

This moves us directly to an important insight for multiple staff ministries. The community (the Church)

²³Buber, Between Man and Man, pp. 176, 203.

²⁴Buber, I and Thou, p. 25.

which has an emerging center or common purpose often does not live in mutual relationship. Why is this so often true? It is true because the community (the Church) comes to know this unity only through the lived witness of dynamic relationships. In the church this means that multiple staff persons must live "the gospel" they seek to proclaim.

When the members of a multiple staff are spending their effort at precise program and its execution with definition intellectually affirmed but emotionally denied, confusion and strife are certain to arise. Variety of method and ability on the part of staff members is creative only when common purpose is defined and mutual relationship is established. The finest program can have little meaning in a multiple staff setting apart from common goals and depth relationships. Ministers and all staff personnel need continually to renew their vision by study and discussion as to the nature and purpose of their individual as well as corporate ministries and their understanding of the purpose of the church. In the complex organization and busyness of the modern urban church, it is easy to lose sight of common purpose (center) and even to pursue conflicting goals and thus to witness to "bad news" instead of "the gospel." Therefore, relationship and purpose are central to any specialized ministry and

the dynamic core of a team ministry. The church with a multiple staff has especially to guard against becoming simply more institutionalized and more complex in organization and activity, without regard for a deepening sense of mission or purpose and without providing for the development of its people through the deepening of vital relationships. If, as Buber says, "all life is meeting," then the local church must seek to provide opportunity for "meeting," and this is done in part by the staff's witnessing to the importance of relationship through sharing its lives with one another and the congregation. It cannot be re-emphasized too emphatically: relationship in community (the Church) comes only (sola) through a lived witness of dynamic relationship.

Randolph Crump Miller, in his incisive book Biblical Theology in Christian Education says that

whether or not he is smart or dumb, old or young, the Christian gospel can be transmitted /to persons/ only /sola/ within a loving accepting, graceful Christian group. Whether a (person) understands depends upon the spiritual health of his teachers (clergy) and the community wherein he is taught.²⁵

Because of our failure, as clergy, to witness to love and understanding in our own staff relationship, our people more often than not witness strife and division,

²⁵Randolph Crump Miller, Biblical Theology and Christian Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956, p. 172.

hate and mistrust. We, clergy and congregation alike, are living examples of the way the church today is demonic. We are a part of the church which is seeking security in the world as an institution, rather than seeking to become a community of love which is willing to lose its life.

People are searching and hungry and we are giving them "stones for bread." We teach dogma and perform ritual instead of living out our vital witness. We give them devotion to creeping institutionalism instead of loving relationship. We share our creeds and moralisms instead of a living faith. It is important to note that, in its deepest meaning, faith is not something we believe about, it is persons we believe in.

Clergy and laymen alike fail at this point because we use words, words, and more words rather than seeking to create redemptive relationships. Unless the staff itself is a redemptive fellowship from whom the congregation may learn the power of such relationships, no words we use, not even the authoritative words of scripture, will have any meaning. This is true because in the final analysis the meaning of words is derived from what happens to people in relationship to others.

What are some of the demands and by-products of positive relationship? Positive relationship demands a meeting of minds around what Buber refers to as "center"

and what we call a "common purpose." Positive relationship requires an openness with respect to motives and intentions. It permits a growth in mutual respect which is kept alive only as there is frank honesty. Out of a growing understanding of a "common purpose" and a life of honest dialogue there comes a high degree of predictability among staff members. The deeper the relationship and the more involved the dialogue the greater the predictability. This element of predictability and the growing self-awareness possible in this type of relationship issues in a new concept of authority which will be discussed in a later chapter. However, no matter what the staff structure, staff members should seek to know each other so intimately that they feel secure in predicting how each may think, or feel, or act in a given situation.

Such sharing is essential to a team ministry and demands real "meeting" because a busy church staff is generally short on time. The "typical" staff meeting, while necessary, usually fails in terms of the dynamic and need being discussed. Staff conferences that are going to add to relationship are short on details and long on individual involvement and sharing. It is not a mistake to say that in order to develop the kind of relationship necessary for any staff to witness to its "common purpose" large blocks of time must be spent in common study,

discussion, and the sharing of individual deep concerns. This need for "shared lives" is related to the concern expressed earlier regarding loneliness. The staff must take the time to develop such a trust in each other that its meetings can become times for sharing theological differences, uneasy feelings, and concerns for possible gaps in the ministry of a fellow-staff member. It must be a time when personal problems, health difficulties, financial worries, fears and anxieties can be shared. It is within such relationships that trust and confidence deepen, mutual support can grow, and the fullest potential of each staff member realized. Thus it is that "the spirit of relationships determines the nature of communication."²⁶

A key concept woven into the fabric of positive relationship is encounter. While this is very close to the previously discussed concept of "I-Thou" it partakes of the more earthy and realistic. Encounter also includes the "I-It" relationship (meeting the other as object as well as subject). True encounter demands that we see where the other stands and receive this same awareness from the other. Such a meeting includes both the concrete individuality of the other and their mystery. This encounter always involves tension. Interpersonal relations involve

²⁶Howe, op. cit., p. 75.

the security of self. In other words, encounter demands "risk." It may require self-criticism and the admission that answers we thought were valid are no longer sound. Encounter opens the self-image to reappraisal. How different dare I be? How dependent can I appear? How much can I risk in this relationship? These and other probing questions are always demanding answers. They are answered in the way we respond to the relationship. But just as it is tension that produces music in a violin, so the tension existent in personal encounter can produce creativity.

Encounter is a mutual ministry. It is a ministry of mutual self-revelation and entering into the world of the other. Self-revelation is ministry to the other person, for who can live well if he cannot "see" the other, where he stands and with what he is struggling. On the other hand, the only way we become manifest to ourselves is to be in an experience with another who has revealed his inner culture to us. Without self-revelation there can be no "meeting." The individual, whoever he be, must become manifest to himself before he can reveal his depths to another. This can happen only in an atmosphere of complete trust.

In encounter a most important aspect of learning takes place. This happens because we are confronted not so much by facts or doctrines as by a person whose

acceptance of us becomes a judgment of ourselves as persons, causing us to reevaluate what we know about who we are.

To know that I am valued as a person of unique worth by another person is likely to be my most significant discovery. From this epochal revelation will come my awareness of personal identity, of moral responsibility, and of religious reverence.²⁷

Living in relationship gives birth to an honest intimacy. And by intimacy we mean a warm response of some kind. This response is an aliveness, an openness.

Each of us gets from such a relationship, tremendous self-confirmation. This is an awareness that someone who knows all about me still cares for me and enjoys me "just as I am." With all his knowledge of me, he is still on my side (is "for" me). The key to the relationship of intimacy is that a person is willing to risk "getting his shins kicked" because he knows that there is something better deep down inside his person that will find expression if he can just stand this process long enough.

Intimacy also means "knowing" somebody who is a good friend of my developing self--who has faith in my becoming the self I am not yet, but believe can be actualized. We come to see that intimacy is a distinctive form of deep

²⁷Paul E. Johnson, "Religious Experience as a Person-to-Person Encounter," Readings in the Psychology of Religion, Orlo Strunk, Jr., editor (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 124.

belonging. It is indeed the fusing of the biologies of life with human relationships.

Apart from the value of positive relationships as the catalyst for self-understanding and as an avenue to meaning and purpose in life, positive relationships and personal encounter with another stand as the only gates to an experience of personal relationship with God. Simply stated the facts are these: one meets God in relationship with other persons, and loses sight of Him when these relationships are broken or unhealthy. God was in Christ seeking to reconcile men to Himself through the healing of broken relationships.

The basic motive of the religious quest is to find a person-to-person relationship of faithful love. To interpret this quest according to the evidence of most religious experience, is to perceive a religious person responding to God as the ultimate person who creates values.²⁸

The Word of God can be understood only when it is spoken in relation to the world of men, because the vitality of religious teaching is, like all learning, dependent upon an awareness of the meanings and questions of human life. The source of the meanings that are brought to encounter grow out of the experiences that one has had in relation to the most important "others" in his life. God's acceptance can be communicated only through

²⁸Ibid., p. 125.

our acceptance by others. Somehow we must become open to others in order that God's acceptance may be expressed no matter how limited and broken our ability to accept him. "All ministry, then, is a ministry of relationship or it cannot bring man into a saving encounter with the redeeming God."²⁹

Buber says,

There is a longing for the world to become present to us as a person which goes out to us as we do to it, which chooses and recognizes us as we do it, which is confirmed in us as we are in it. It is communion in the face of the lonely night.³⁰

This is far more than "togetherness." "We can be the deadening conformity and flight from responsibility that is suburban and organization man today."³¹ Or, "we" can be the confrontation of two or more personalities, differing in their past, their rearing, their view of life, their prejudices, their failures who in relationship find that they are less alike than they thought and yet are able through continued encounter to grow and live together.

If relationship and encounter brings us face to face with truth, then it follows that really to see another is to see "The Other." Really to love another is

²⁹Howe, op. cit., p. 80.

³⁰Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 88.

³¹Arnold B. Come, Agents of Reconciliation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 37.

to love "The Other," and to be truly loved by another is
to know the love of God.

CHAPTER IV

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONSHIP

The establishment of dynamic (positive) relationship with other persons does not come about by accident or chance. The first meeting may be the result of many and various previous chance or accidental decisions but the "meeting" demands involvement. The need for dynamic relationship may be "given" but the establishment of it comes through intention, and intention requires action.

The starting-point of personal development, since a person is an agent, is the development of the ability to act. Action . . . is defined by intention, and so involves knowledge as a determinant of purposeful movement. But this presupposes its own negative, a motive consciousness which determines purposive behavior without knowledge, as reaction to stimulus. Intention, therefore, presupposes motivation, and a complete account of action involves the consideration of its motivation as well as of its intention.¹

The building of the foundation and superstructure of a dynamic relationship begins when there is a desire on the part of two or more persons to act in response to one another. This is actually a call to the "life of dialogue" rather than a life of "monologue," a call to participation instead of separateness. In genuine dialogue, which is a prerequisite of dynamic relationship, each of the

¹John Macmurray, Persons in Relation (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 64.

participants has in mind the other in his present and particular being; and turns to him with the intention of establishing a mutual relation between himself and the other person. This is placed over and against the person who is living the life of monologue. Such a person is aware of the other as an integrity, nevertheless someone with whom he can communicate. The basic moment of the "life of dialogue" is the "turning toward the other" and as a result this other person steps forth and becomes a presence. According to Ross Snyder, "all relationship requires dialogue with otherness."

This intention is converted into acting energy when there comes to awareness the presence of "common purpose" or "center," which brings into being the reality of the other as person.

The non-personal other is thus the correlate of the self as body, that is, as a material object. Now what is excluded in this abstraction is intention. The non-personal other is that which is active without intention. Its correlate is myself unintentionally active.²

In the establishment of our relationship this came in the form of a simple discovery. This discovery was that we had a common denominational background (Disciples of Christ) in a seminary largely made up of Methodist students. This discovery lead to the awareness of other common

²Ibid., p. 80.

interests and goals. It was from such a beginning that our relationship grew.

At first our common purposes were less than ultimate. They centered in the desire to complete somehow the requirements for graduation and move on. As the depth of our relationship grew, the center of purpose moved from the immediate to a more ultimate concern of vital ministry. Once the idea of a team ministry as an answer to a vital ministry together was shared, the focus and purpose of our growing relationship became more clear. This new awareness enabled us to be more open in order that each might determine the real possibilities of such a venture.

Since mutuality is constitutive for the personal, it follows that "I" need "you" in order to be myself. My primary fear is, therefore, that "you" will not respond to my need, and that in consequence my personal existence will be frustrated. Fear, as a personal motive, is at once fear for the other and fear for oneself. Thus both love and fear fall within the personal relation; both refer to this relation; and fear, as the negative, presupposes love and is subordinate to it.

To complete this statement we must notice that both the positive and the negative motives are operative in all personal action. It is for this reason that we have described the original motivation of the personal as bipolar and "love" and "fear" as the positive and negative poles of a single motivation. This accords with the form of the personal as we have determined it--a positive which contains, is constituted by and subordinates its own negative. It is easy to see that this must be so. Action contains two elements--or, as we phrased it, has two dimensions--movement and knowledge. Consequently, it /action/ is deliberate, while a reaction to stimulus is impulsive . . . fear is in its nature inhibitory; and most positive action must contain an element of negative motivation if it is not to be completely thoughtless and reckless. The most

pervasive expression of this is the continued presence in action of an awareness . . . of the possibility of making a mistake, of doing the wrong thing.³

This bipolar aspect of motivation plays an important role as two or more individuals search for "common purpose." There is a tension that develops in the formative period of relationships. This develops because of an awareness that the fulfillment of what is perceived to be the "common purpose," depends not merely upon oneself but also upon the other, so that there is always the possibility that your call for affirmation (according to your understanding of the "common purpose") may not meet with response. "My" success depends also upon the motive and intention of the other person.

This tension diminishes as the depth of the relationship grows, because slowly, gradually "common purposes" become "common purpose." Once the original plural aspect of purpose becomes singular there is little chance for misunderstanding unless, because of lack of communication, the singular becomes diffused or purpose becomes individual. Once the awareness of tension fades there comes into being a unity which is felt by the individual as a new freedom to be oneself.

Now the original unity which is developed in this way is a relation of persons. It is the unity of a common life. The "you" and "I" relation . . .

³Ibid., p. 70.

constitutes the personal, and both the "you" and "I" are constituted, as individual persons, by the mutuality of their relation. Consequently, the development of the individual person is the development of his relation to the other. Personal individuality is not an original given fact. It is achieved through the progressive differentiation of the original unity of the "you" and "I."⁴

Human experience is shared experience; human life, even in its most individual phases, is a common life; and all human behavior has, inherent in its structure, a reference to the personal other. All this may be summed up by saying that the primary unit of personal existence is not the individual, but two or more persons in mutual relation. We are not persons in our own individual right, but by virtue of our relation with one another. The unit of the personal is not, according to John Macmurray, the "I" but the "you and I." The "you and I" awareness, as we have said, is deepened and made secure when through honest dialogue the common purpose, necessary to such relationship, is discovered, because, in the final analysis, it is our ability to share our experiences with one another and so to constitute and participate in a common experience that opens the door of awareness.

For the character that distinguishes rational from non-rational experience, in all the expressions of reason, is its reference to the Other-than-myself. What we call "objectivity" is one expression of this--the conscious reference of an idea to an object. But

⁴Ibid., p. 91.

it is to be noted that this is not the primary expression of reason. What is primary, even in respect of reflective thought--is the reference to the other person. A true judgment is one which is made by one individual--as every judgment must be--but is valid for all others. Objective thought presupposes this by the assumption that there is a "common" object about which a communication may be made.⁵

It was out of such a growing awareness that the possibility of a team ministry was to take root and grow. As we have said, "common purposes" changed into "common purpose," surface dialogue developed into intensive depth sharing and a new freedom to live and act was discovered. In such a relationship love takes on new meaning. Love is the qualitative new kind of being that exists when in affirming the other's being I affirm my own. Another liberating discovery is made that accepting the other is not to give up the self, but to give up the burden of the self.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book Life Together, defines the dynamic of depth relationship when he explains that "bearing the burden of the other person means involvement with the created reality of the other, to accept it and affirm it and in bearing with it, to break through to the point where we take joy in it."⁶ The major point

⁵Ibid., p. 61.

⁶Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 101.

being, and our experience in the intimate relationship of a team ministry affirms this, that there is always a struggle in accepting and affirming the other before the dawn of a new freedom--the new freedom being the joy of a depth relationship, where your affirming of the other becomes an awareness of your own freedom to be yourself. The best illustration for this conviction is the change evident in our lives as we have shared a common ministry.

Mutuality provides the primary condition of our freedom. Freedom is the capacity to determine the future by action. We are agents; but this capacity to act is itself problematical. It has to be realized through the resolution of the problems it presents, and the resolution of these rests upon the development of our knowledge. The fundamental condition for the resolution of the problem of freedom is our knowledge of one another. But this knowledge is one in which the dissociation of fact and value is impossible, so that neither science nor art can extend it. For the knowledge of one another, and so of ourselves, can be realized only through a mutual self-revelation; and this is possible only when we love one another. If we fear one another we must defend and hide ourselves. Moreover, since our knowledge of one another conditions all our activities, both practical and reflective, we find here the ultimate of all our knowing and all our action. This is the field of religion; and in this field the conditions of interpersonal knowledge have to be created by the overcoming of fear, and so by the transforming of motives.⁷

It has become evident that relationship of a deep and positive nature can never be a mere matter of fact. It must be a matter of intention. It is necessary that in the establishment there is prior intention. In other words,

⁷Macmurray, op. cit., pp. 211-212.

you cannot wish that such relationship might come into being, you must put yourself to the task of building the desired or intended relationship. The second insight which it is necessary to understand is that having begun the search for dynamic relationship you cannot determine a priori the final form or depth. However, the conception we have of our relations to one another determines, in part, the relations themselves. You seldom grow beyond your capacity to vision, and relationships are never deeper than one's willingness to risk himself.

Our actions or decisions to move away from positive relationship appear to be determined, though they are actually free. This is true because a negative motivation in relation to others is a defense action and only appears to be dictated by the other person. In reality, it is not the other person but a personal fear of him and for self that causes such action. This brings clearly into focus the previously suggested polarity of relationship--fear and love.

This can be easily illustrated: two friends quarrel and are estranged, each blames the other for the bad relations which exist between them. This is true because when my motivations are negative I appear to myself to be isolated and forced to act for myself and to achieve whatever I wish to achieve by my individual efforts. I see

the world as either neutral or negative, not caring for my success or failure. Yet in fact, my isolation is a self-isolation, a withdrawal from relationship through fear of the other.

I need you to be myself [my true self]. This need is for a fully positive personal relation in which, because we trust one another, we can think and feel and act together. Only in such a relation can we really be ourselves. If we quarrel, each of us withdraws from the other into himself, and the trust is replaced by fear. We can no longer be ourselves in relation to one another. We are in conflict, and each of us loses his freedom and must act under constraint (fear). There are two ways in which this situation can be met without actually breaking relationship--which, we are assuming, is a necessary one. There may be a reconciliation which restores the original confidence; the negative motivation may be overcome and the positive relation reestablished. Or we may agree to cooperate on conditions which impose a restraint upon each of us, and which prevent the outbreak of active hostility. The negative motivation the fear of the other, will remain, but will be suppressed. This will make possible co-operation for such ends as each of us has an interest in achieving. But we will remain isolated individuals, and the co-operation between us, though it may appear to satisfy our need of one another, will not really satisfy "us."⁸

This extended quotation makes it evident that relationships can differ greatly because of negative or positive motivations. Negative motivation is indirect while positive motivation is direct. That is, love is love for the other while fear is fear for oneself. Erich Fromm states:

⁸Ibid., p. 150.

Love is union with somebody, outside oneself, under the condition of retaining the separateness and integrity of one's own self. This is the experience that does away with illusions. There is no need to inflate the image of the other person, or of myself, since the reality of active sharing and loving permits me to transcend my individualized existence and at the same time to experience myself as the active power which constitutes the act of loving.⁹

The whole feeling of fulfillment so available in dynamic relationship and necessary to the establishment of relationship is captured in the following quotation from Kurt Goldstein.

Love is not merely a mutual gratification and compliance; it is a higher form of self actualization, a challenge to develop both one's self and another.¹⁰

The significant fact relative to the establishment or experience of dynamic relationship is that there is no need to justify the existence of a personal relationship. In fact, the purpose of this dissertation is not to justify what we have experienced in deep personal relationship, but to indicate the dynamic and potential which is possible for others. We are not called upon to prove the validity of our team but to witness to its power in our lives and to project its potential for other ministries. A parallel

⁹Erich Fromm, "Value, Psychology and Human Existence," New Knowledge in Human Values, ed. Abraham H. Maslow (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 153.

¹⁰Seward Hiltner, Self Understanding (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 153.

awareness of this is seen in John Macmurray's insight that

We should all agree that slavery is unjustifiable, since it involves a practical denial of human personality. But whether we are right in this or not, it is at least certain that it must require a justification. But a personal relationship of persons does not require justification. It is the norm for all personal relations. If I treat another person as a person and enter into fully personal relations with him, it is absurd to ask me to justify my behavior. There is therefore an important difference between the personal attitude and the impersonal, and consequently between the conception of the other person that each involves. The former is always right, since it needs no justification; but the latter, since it does require to be justified, is right only conditionally. We have to ask of any impersonal attitude under what conditions it is justifiable. The answer to this question which seems proper is that the impersonal attitude is justifiable when it is itself subordinated to the personal attitude, when it is adopted for the sake of the personal, and is itself included as a negative which is necessary to the positive.¹¹

One needs to discover the ingredients which are necessary in the establishment of a positive relationship. It cannot, however, be stated too emphatically that the power of any relationship resides within the relationship and not its structure. The establishment of relationship is found not in the presence of what might be called the necessary ingredients but in the quality of those ingredients. Simply stated the facts are these: one cannot structure dynamic relationship; the structure serves to define--not to establish. Secondly, quantity and sequence

¹¹Macmurray, op. cit., p. 35.

of ingredients are not primary, but quality.¹²

If, as Reuel Howe states, "reconciliation is the business of the Church" then we, as members of that Church, are called upon to represent this reconciliation in our lives. We are set, or we set ourselves in the world to bring the gift of reconciliation, which is the fact of our relationship to others and to God. This gift cannot be given to others until it has first been received and lived in our experience. The growing awareness of this basic fact served as the platform for our experiment in a team ministry, because the key is relationship.

The primary ingredients of depth relationship are a willingness and the ability not only to speak but to hear and to respond to what is heard. The dynamic of this is seen in what Martin Buber calls "experiencing the other side." That is, to feel an event, any event, from the side of the person one meets as well as from one's own side. We are called upon, because of the very nature of honest or depth relationship, to enter not only for the purpose of gaining, but also for the express purpose of giving. In order to do this we must seek to give up our pretensions and our defensive need to justify ourselves, and this is possible only in whatever degree each finds his being

¹²See Appendix I for structure of a team ministry and statements of intention and needs.

affirmed by the other. We must discover a reassurance of life by having it affirmed in our relationship with one another.

This demands what Ross Snyder calls "entering into," an activation of all that we know ourselves to be so that we let "what is" in the other person speak to us. Buber draws a meaningful distinction between empathy and inclusion which might serve to deepen our understanding of entering into another person. Empathy is not sufficient to elicit identification. It means the transposition of oneself from here to there, but implies the exclusion of one's own concreteness and thus the extinguishing of the actual situation of life. Inclusion is the extension of one's concreteness in which both persons are included by virtue of their relationship. This does not mean passivity, being only half alive. Each is fully himself, but focused in the direction of really hearing the other speak his being. Each is working at understanding the inner world and experiences of the other person as he attempts to report them. It must be the intention of each to enter into the feeling, thoughts, and goals of the other. Such an "entering into" implies depth, rather than surface, experiencing; such a relationship means a participative knowledge which makes any role as spectator impossible. This knowledge, to be valid, comes from within the experience. When this occurs one moves into the inner world of the other, with no desire

to manipulate, but just to go along with it. This means "co-living" the experience, and sharing common purpose. One may, in fact, help the other with questions and ideas that are not yet important to his own stream of consciousness, or catch with his developing sensitivity, the feelings that are present in the other's experience but may not be in his field of attention. However, both of these possible contributions must be seen by the learner as a development of the other's experience, and not an adding to it. This experience of "entering into" the other by two distinctive persons who share a common experience has the potential of causing something new to be born in both. At least two processes must take place within the subjects involved. Each must interiorize the other's feelings of the experience and also sense the experience with his own powers of mind and feeling. The "entering into" unites subjects, yet each always remains an individual center.

The establishment of positive relationship is possible only when real "meeting" takes place between persons in which the reality of the other is not only known, but is appreciated and accepted. Any relationship involving a mutual ministry of meanings requires, from the beginning, man to man conversations. It calls for the sharing of purposes, hopes, and dreams in order that from

an awareness of common purposes might spring a shared life of "common purpose." Such conversation includes honest confrontation, a leveling with each other which leads to the kind of development in each which neither expected. An honest relationship which creates a "new being" requires meeting each fresh situation with a spontaneous wholeness responding out of the depths rather than in terms of any previously-decided rules or images, or from compulsive emotion; and this response is such that it calls out potentialities that were hidden within that situation at that moment. The willingness to share in such conversation comes when one has found someone with whom he can share his life. This "finding" comes from an individual's desire to search for such a person. Thus it is that the fact of relationship and common purpose is not the "given," the desire to search is the necessary "given." Relationship is never and can never be a matter of fact. It must always be a matter of continuous intention. Thus, relationship is never static, but always dynamic.

Our experience in building not only a positive relationship but an exciting concept of ministry has led us to see the importance of an ability to speak, that is, the ability or capacity to enter into reciprocal communication with one another. It has become increasingly clear that it is the ability to share experience that allows for the

constitution of common purpose and the participation in it. From this sharing of common purpose is born a mutuality, a mutual delight, that not only cements the original experience but establishes a foundation for wider relations.

It is evident that the sequence between common purpose and real meeting (communication) cannot be clearly drawn. However, that they must both be present in dynamic relationship cannot be denied. Communication, or a "willingness to dialogue," as Reuel Howe calls it, is an ingredient necessary to begin any relationship. Depth relationship is born and flourishes in communication in which there is both the intimacy of what is shared in common and the awe of the mystery that makes each a different individual. The birth of this mutuality (mutual awareness) in relationship reveals an important distinction between communication and words. The monological illusion, the illusion that words alone are sources of power and truth, is widely prevalent, but perhaps nowhere so completely as in the church. We are too often prone to feel that just because we speak we are heard and understood. However, life lived in the struggle of honest communication (dialogue) reveals how empty and meaningless words may be apart from the understanding of a common purpose. Depth relationship demands communication, and the purpose of communication is to find common purpose (mutuality) and

to move on into the arena of action. Reuel Howe states that "the purpose of dialogue (communication) is to restore the tension between vitality and form."¹³

Another ingredient essential to the establishment as well as continuation of relationship is openness. This is related to the scriptural declaration, "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it."¹⁴ Relationship is nourished and made whole as openness is given and received. Openness means a willingness to express real feelings. An important aspect of openness in relationship, however, is the willingness to be confronted with how others perceive us and, indeed, with what we are. This is true because as we come into a depth relationship with another and open ourselves in order to become known, we become painfully aware of ourselves. This confrontation is not easy to take and often leads to crisis and a shrinking back from some repressed reality. When this happens, openness becomes lost in the fact of a defense withdrawal as willingness is neutralized by fear. When this withdrawal becomes the rule rather than the exception, a wall of fear and an attitude of self-protection forces a crisis. Continuing crisis,

¹³Reuel Howe, The Miracle of Dialogue (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), p. 64.

¹⁴Matthew 10:39.

resulting from a lack of openness, tends to destroy or alienate--causing such estrangement that future positive relationships are suspect because relationship, while it requires "risk," demands trust--and broken trust is not easily restored. Thus, willingness is never enough to assure relationship. The ability to "risk" must be present in some degree.

This moves us directly to another important ingredient in the establishment of relationship. That ingredient is trust. "The miracle of dialogue (relationship) is the calling forth of persons who have found their own unique relation to truth and who serve that truth with creative expectancy."¹⁵ "Confidence (trust) is not won by the strenuous effort to win it, but by direct and ingenious participation in the life of the people one is dealing with."¹⁶ If just one human being exists, able to accept me as I am and with whom I feel trust, I know that in "darkness the light lies hidden, in fear there is salvation, and in the callousness of one's fellowmen the great love."¹⁷ The demand for acceptance and trust is implicit in every relationship.

¹⁵Howe, op. cit., p. 17.

¹⁶Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 107.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 98.

The preceding paragraphs have sketched some of the important ingredients to the establishment of relationship. Part of the need for such establishments does not, however, rest in the virtue of the ingredients. The need to establish a relationship on a deep, personal level is vital because from one such relationship comes the willingness and ability on the part of the individual to enter into many such relationships. It is out of this growing self-awareness and willingness to risk self that the freedom "to be" is born. Sartre writes, "I cannot know myself except through the intermediary of another person."¹⁸ If this is true, and our experience suggests that it is, then through the establishment of vital relationship one opens the door to life. We would add, through such relationship in the team ministry, new possibilities and new power is created for the widening horizons of effective ministry, because through depth relationship the direction is made clear and individual ministries find a compliment, not a competitor.

¹⁸Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 130.

CHAPTER V

THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIP

I. INTRODUCTION

The term relationship implies dynamic; however, there are dynamics within relationship which are important for the understanding of team ministry. The first quality of the individual who would experience the dynamics of relationship in the team ministry is courage. This courage is seen in the ability to move beyond accepted structures of procedure into new areas of action. It involves a willingness to risk one's life with another in fulfilling a dream. Paul Tournier has expressed it this way:

It takes plenty of courage to live according to one's convictions. That is why it is always so difficult to break away from social conformity, to act differently from everybody else. And it is because everybody conforms to the "done thing" that it becomes so hard to depart from it. "Dare to detach yourself from the herd" once wrote Romain Rolland. As soon as a man obeys his inner call, he upsets the game, and brings to light around him the persons buried underneath the personages /super-ego/. Albert Camus gives a penetrating study of this in his book The Rebel.¹

While this emphasis might be accepted, the willingness to take such risks is not easily assumed. The dream

¹Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 204.

of a team ministry was planted and cultivated in several courses we took together in the area of Parish Ministry. The dream remained a dream because we thought that its possibility was too distant. The traditional structure of ministries within our churches was, we felt, too rigid to allow for so radical a change as the team ministry implied. Having thus suppressed the possibility of our dream we began to plan for further education with the goal of a teaching ministry. We had decided previously that the pastoral ministry as presently constituted was not really the challenge we wanted.

In the process of making final plans for a doctoral program of study we decided that our dream of a team ministry was worth any risk we might be called upon to take. We shelved our applications and made arrangements to present our ideas to the Executive Secretary of our churches in Southern California. In preparation for this meeting we prepared a document seeking to explain our concept.² This document sought to present the structure and imply the dynamic of our ideas regarding a team ministry. With the help and counsel of Frank Kimper of

²W. W. Carpenter and James W. Pierson, "Introduction to a Team Ministry" (An original typed document to introduce team ministry concept to Central Christian Church, Van Nuys, California, 1961). Included in this dissertation as Appendix I.

the School of Theology we were able to state in clearer terms our intentions and goals. With this tool in hand, forgetting the current structures, and with fear and trembling we entered the office of James Parrott, Executive Secretary of Southern California Christian Churches, to share with him our concept of multiple staff. We never expected anything more than a laugh or "fatherly" counsel on how young ministers should accept things as they are. It was to our complete surprise that James Parrott listened with interest, asked some pertinent questions, and then expressed a reserved comment that he felt it might have some possibility. What we had expected was rejection--we received acceptance and encouragement. From that moment James Parrott began to work with us, Frank Kimper, and a pilot church we agreed upon, to present and sell a new concept we had chosen to call a team ministry.

This was only the first and most dramatic of the risks that had to be taken. The dream of a team ministry was still, at best, only on paper. We felt sure of its possibility under ideal circumstances but what local church offers an ideal setting? We began to discuss ways in which we might assure success for the adventure, but finally decided that the quality of our relationship was our best safeguard.

The greatest opposition and skepticism to this new

venture was seen in fellow ministers. They expressed great doubt as to the feasibility and desirability of such an arrangement. Further, why should two young ministers be given the opportunity to minister to such an established congregation. There was general agreement, among the ministers of the district to which we went, that this venture would last only a few months. In fact, during the past three and one-half years there have been periodic rumors of a dissolution of the team ministry.

This is mentioned to highlight another risk which was necessary--the risk of alienation from fellow ministers. The task of building relationships and lines of communication with the clergy with whom we were supposed to work was difficult. We were first thought of as freaks, later as necessary evils, and only now are we beginning to feel that others are now finding some validity and importance in what we are doing. The road has been filled with happy experiences of team growth, and with obstacles to broader relationships. This, however, is becoming less evident as the dynamic and possibility of team ministries is being seen.

There are two paths open to the ministry, or more specifically, to a minister. He can achieve a pre-determined goal by his own effort, which means accepting or developing an image for himself and achieving a certain

skill at the task. On the other hand, he can take the path of trusting personal encounter. The first brings loneliness and tension; the second, an easing of tension and the glory of a shared life and ministry. The one is the glorification of the self and individual will power; the other is self-abandonment, or what the scriptures call "losing one's life in order that it might be found." This second path, the road of personal relationship and encounter, is not a blind alley; it is a road with a direction, a road with a purpose. Its purpose is to call persons to an experience of the unity and oneness of life together, to find and know truth together, and to learn to love man deeply, and God, and themselves. We move toward the full realization of this purpose when we are able to share our lives, finding a mutuality which issues in common purpose.

The vocation of every man is to enter into relation with other persons. This act of entering into relation with others is not as easy as people generally suppose. The invitation to be a person, which is necessary for the individual's becoming a person, must come from another, and one must wait for that invitation. We need to remember what Buber has pointed out, that the invitation comes from a person who must inevitably stand at some distance from us, because relation presupposes both distance (which is another way of saying "distinctness") and presentness. Young couples frequently make the mistake of assuming that love requires only intimacy, so that each strives to lose himself in the other. But such exclusive appropriation of or immersion in another destroys the possibility of relationship, the polarity necessary to dialogue, the polarity we mean by distance. This polarity is necessary for any genuine relationships. . . .

Both presentness and distance are especially required where education or care occurs. Each party must be a distinct and independent person if there is to be a relationship--abnormal dependence of one upon the other or any blurring of the distinctness impairs the relationship.³

The power and dynamic of personal relationship, as related to team ministries, is possible only if there is maintained a vital sense of integrity on the part of all participants.

The psyche is from the beginning a complex of energies and inertias (as such, an aggregation of events) held together, related, by the tensions between them. It is in the midst of this "primal relation" that our intrinsic individuality is situated. The happenings of pleasure and pain, of needs and their satisfaction or frustration, of the freedom to release our energies or the prevention from doing so, reassure us in that delicate situation or threatens us in it.

The waters of the inner world recede and more land lies dry and open, and it is in our nature to go forth and explore it; but it is equally in our nature to lie still, inert. The inner world, like the outer, is a world of opposites in constant inter-play, and we grow in the midst of the tensions between them. It is out of our experience of these events, as we act and react out of our intrinsic individuality, that we begin to have a sense of identity.

The first sense of "who" one is, is naturally founded in one's relation with those aspects of the immediate scene that have satisfied and given pleasure, have not satisfied and given him pleasure, have seemed harmonious or not . . . our identity lies with the people who are close to us, who seem to know well enough who we are though we ourselves do not.⁴

³Reuel Howe, The Miracle of Dialogue (New York: Seabury Press, 1963), pp. 67-68.

⁴H. Westman, The Springs of Creativity (New York: Atheneum, 1961), pp. 25-26.

If in relation to another a person feels accepted no matter what he says and understood whatever his attitude, he becomes free to face up to the ambivalence of his own identity and to be accepting of others. Freed, at least to the extent of this personal encounter or series of encounters, from struggling with an outside will, he can begin to wrestle with his own. We are able to give acceptance when we accept the fact of another's integrity or individuality and the difference that his existence makes in the equilibrium of the self. If we are not accepted, we are not sufficiently self-accepting to be able to accept others as they need to be. This vicious circle can be broken only by the power of some person who is secure enough to meet the demands that acceptance places upon him.

Our feelings of acceptance and of accepting-ness begin with our earliest experiences of relationship. We begin to differentiate ourselves from others as we, in various ways, relate to persons and life around us. Even those whom we love are potential adversaries to the self. Only through active participation and communication, where the being and truth of one meets the being and truth of the other, can the love and acceptance be expressed that is essential to the being of both. Compromise in the negative sense is not the aim and goal of communication

or a team ministry; rather it is two unique persons standing in complementary relationship to each other. The results are far more than either the sum of both parts or the modification of one set of ideas. The results are new births and new vistas. Saying "no" may be the kind of independent declaration which the other needs in order to affirm his own identity in the face of a threat to his being which is inwardly demanding retreat. On the other hand, giving in to his demands may be as much a rejection of him as a responsible person as it is a denial of one's own integrity. "The self-criticism induced by the disapproval of others does not necessarily have to remain internalized. It can become the stimulus for self-improvement."⁵

The opposite avenue to self-understanding and identity apart from relationship is introspection. The futility of this approach is underlined by Paul Tournier when he writes,

Introspection [without relationship to others] does not throw any sure light on oneself: Self-examination is an exhausting undertaking. The mind becomes so engrossed in it that it loses its normal capacity for relationship with the world and with God. Locked in a narrow round of endless and sterile self-analysis, the person becomes shrunk and deformed, while false problems multiply "ad infinitum."

⁵Nathaniel Cantor, Dynamics of Learning (Buffalo, New York: Henry Steward, 1946), p. 71.

That shrewd judge of human nature, Saint Francis de Sales, had already written: "It is not possible that the Spirit of God should dwell in a mind that wishes to know too much of what is happening within itself. . . . You are afraid of being afraid, then you are afraid of being afraid of being afraid. Some vexation vexes you, and then you are vexed at being vexed by that vexation. In the same way I have often seen people who, having lost their tempers, are afterwards angry at having been angry."⁶

It is our thesis that dynamic relationship opens the door to self-understanding and thus to new power for action and accomplishment. The polarities are relationship and introspection and neither is valid without the tension from the other. Thus to be related to another without examining the personal meaning of that relationship is to be related without purpose or intention. On the other hand, to be deeply engaged in the search for self-identity through introspection without the tension of relationship with another is to be engaged in a futile search.

There are two important aspects of dynamic relationship which demand consideration at this point. The first is the personal fulfillment available to the individuals involved in the relationship. The second is the practical significance of the team ministry as it relates to the church and its function in twentieth-century America.

⁶ Tournier, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

II. PERSONAL FULFILLMENT

It is extremely difficult to relate the experience of new, dynamic relationships. Their meanings are hidden in the routine, day-to-day experiences of life. To say that one is freed or that one feels more adequate than at previous times is to express words which have far deeper meanings than the printed page is able to reveal. However, some attempt must be made to portray the values available in a team relationship in the context of ministry as an invitation to others.

H. Westman states,

The Self accepts life as a whole and allows all experience, and when we are properly related with it, it acts within the psyche always in favor of wholeness, the unified, rounded, harmonious, yet open and free. According to our willingness to accept and allow in the same way, we may come to that signal experience of the inescapable relations of all things for it is this experience which makes actual to us our unity within ourselves, with our fellow men and with the universe.

A human relationship becomes, therefore, potentially more than a personal, private matter. It is a way of experiencing and exemplifying in action an essential aspect of Being. It may, in other words, achieve form, in the artists' sense of that word. The power in the work of art that renders chaos into order, establishes dependencies in the name of independence, reconciles opposing forces in the name of a higher unity and itself continues to endure within that unity is, ultimately, the power of Being itself. It may equally infuse the relations of man with his fellow men.

It is this form that both patient and therapist may experience in their relationship. Though the therapist's participation has the quality of

compassionate detachment, he must in fact take part not only as an observer but as a human being. Both he and the patient must make a mutual effort at adventurous human understanding; both set out together on a kind of voyage of exploration of the psyche. As the situation between them becomes more open and reciprocal, they are both brought to deal with essentially unconscious material; and when that material is of a transpersonal nature, both may experience the human relationship at its profoundest level, experience the Self as a direct manifestation of Being and discover much that is meaningful for all men.⁷

As such relationships of openness are developed, it is possible to pass from information about a person or life into communion with that person and life. Any deep level of relationship (communication) brings us to the threshold of communion. When fellow creatures share a mutuality, there is growth toward the experience of communion. By communion we mean being opened up and drawn in. Communion comes as a result of a desire within us for the world to become present to us as a person, to reach out to us as we to it, to choose and recognize us as we choose and recognize it. When this occurs, we experience communion with man, the world, and God. It is possible to state that in dynamic, depth relationships (team ministries) one finds himself more consistently standing at, and crossing, the threshold of communion and thus able to experience a new sense of oneness and a whole new world of meanings.

⁷Westman, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

Through relationship life situations are flooded with new possibilities. Real living--life filled with positive meaning--is encounter and interchange between persons. A new excitement is born as one becomes aware that his total life, shared in a common ministry, increases the actualized aspect of his potential. The awareness that one's ideas and commitments are strengthened and deepened through his honest relationship with another's ideas and commitments breeds a sense of expectation which colors all experiences.

. . . excitement and promise . . . springs from the possibility that two or more persons, living most of the time in some degree of loneliness, will rendezvous, like two astronauts, in the infinity of relationship, and from this meeting, move on to discover new worlds of meaning. Many of our relationships are realizations of this possibility; yet, tragically, too many of them are tombs in which the possibilities of meeting are buried. But the person, whose character and expectations have changed his capacity to speak and to leave the other free to respond, finds that what had appeared to be drab human situations have become occasions for new adventure. So far as the meaning of relationships and life is concerned, we are like prospectors for gold, walking aimlessly back and forth over the richest of lodes,⁸ without knowing the wealth that is beneath our feet.⁸

Any individual needs another person with whom to relate in order to realize his full potential. This important fact has been deleted from the experience of the clergy. When we assume that the clergyman relates to God and everybody else has the responsibility to relate to the

⁸ Howe, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

clergyman. However, the clergyman will find a new sense of purpose and mission if he is able to share a ministry with some other person and his congregation rather than to direct a ministry to and for these people.

As he [the clergyman] begins to emerge from his containment [old ideas] within the forces of the natural order, he finds himself able to step forward out of the frames of his various identifications out of those strictures and limitations of individuality that in his inertia he has chosen or unwittingly accepted. His sense of himself, of who he is, is broadened and deepened. He becomes more willing to accept the "security of change" in place of the "insecurity of stasis." He becomes more resilient in his summation of himself, more willing to allow what he might previously have rejected and denied.⁹

It might be added that when this process begins to take place the clergyman becomes "alive" to himself and his people and is then able to share his life and thus have a ministry. One of the dynamics built into the structure of a team ministry is an open sharing which begins with "one" and extends to "many," opening the door to meaningful ministry.

The following extended quotation from John Macmurray's book Persons in Relation puts in clear terms some important dynamics of relationship as experienced by us in a team ministry. We can almost feel that he was writing this section from within our experience of the past three and one-half years.

⁹Westman, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

. . . we isolate one pair, as a unit of personal community we can discover the basic structure of community as such. The relation between them is positively motivated in each. Each, then, is heterocentric: the centre of interest and attention is in the other, not in himself. For each, therefore, it is the other who is important, not himself. The other is the center of value. For himself he has no value in himself, but only in the other; consequently he cares for himself only for the sake of the other. But this is mutual; the other cares for him disinterestedly in return. Each, that is to say, acts, and therefore thinks and feels for the other, and not for himself. But because the positive motive contains and subordinates its negative, their unity is no fusion of selves, neither is it a functional unity of differences--it is a unity of persons. Each remains a distinct individual; the other remains really other. Each realizes himself in and through the other.

Such a unity of persons is the self-realization of the personal. For, firstly, they are then related as equals. This does not mean that they have, as a matter of fact, equal abilities, equal rights, equal functions or any other kind of "de facto" equality. The equality is intentional; it is an aspect of the mutuality of the relation. If it were not an equal relation, the motivation would be negative; a relation in which one was using the other as a means to his own end. Secondly, they both realize their freedom as agents, since in the absence of the fear for the self there is no constraint on either, and each can be himself fully; neither is under obligation to act a part. Thus equality and freedom are constitutive of community; and the democratic slogan. "Liberty, equality, fraternity," is an adequate definition of community--of the self-realization of persons in relation.

We must remember, however, that to obtain this analysis we isolated two persons from their relation to all others. If their relation to one another is exclusive of the others, then its motivation in relation to the others is negative: the two friends /ministers/ must defend themselves against the intrusion of the rest. Their friendship becomes a positive element in a motivation which is dominantly negative and will destroy the realization of the exclusive relation itself. To be fully positive /and a team ministry must also strive to be so/ therefore, the relation must be in principle inclusive, and without

limits. Only so can it constitute a community of persons. The self-realization of any individual person is only fully achieved if he is positively motivated towards every other person with whom he is in relation. We can therefore formulate the inherent ideal of the personal. It is a universal community of persons in which each cares for all others and none for himself. This ideal of the personal dynamic of team ministry is also the condition of freedom--that is, of a full realization of his capacity to act--for every person. Short of this there is unintegrated, and therefore suppressed, negative motivations, there is unresolved fear, and fear inhibits action and destroys freedom.¹⁰

Thus it is important to note that the building of a dynamic relationship must not, cannot, stop with the two or three persons who make up the professional staff of any given ministry.

The circle of dynamic relationships begins to expand, once the original relationship is secure, and includes others who share a common purpose and life within the church. Within our local church setting there has been expressed by our other staff members, and especially our secretaries, a feeling of participation in a shared ministry. For the first time they feel within the ministry of the church and not an appendage to be used by the "professional ministers." The dynamic of relationship born in the team ministry speaks to others, such as secretaries, director of music, organist, custodians, business manager, and so forth, to include them in

¹⁰ John Macmurray, Persons in Relation (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp. 158-159.

participation in a single ministry to people. There has developed a feeling of oneness within the total staff of the church which is new when compared with our previous experience in staff relationships. This does not suggest that all of these people are able to feel "their share" in the same degree. It does, however, happen that all are encouraged to enter in and share a common ministry to people.

The circle of relationship continues to expand because there is a contagion in sharing a ministry and sharing life. The officers of the various boards and committees soon begin to feel a part of a common ministry. They no longer feel compelled to "get approval" for certain programs, ideas, or functions but readily begin to share concerns and insights hoping to become a participant in a process which through discussion and study evolves a procedure. When this begins to happen, new life is seen and vitality and hope begin to shine in eyes that once seemed dimmed. Because the load of program and direction is shared, the clergyman is freed to be a pastor to his people.

Our experience as living witnesses to the power of relationship began to bear fruit when after one year many committees and departments elected co-chairmen and began really to share responsibility for their various functions.

This was one of the first indications that our people saw the power and possibility in two or more persons sharing the same ministry and living in dialogue in order to make decisions and develop program.

The circle of relationship continues to expand and deepen. The deeper sharing of lives by individuals within the church and the establishment of small depth discussion groups to explore not only the nature and mission of the church but their own commitment to the will of God is a further indication of the power of sharing a ministry. People are now looking for something in which they can participate as honest persons. The expanding dynamic of relationship from the two to the many allows for such participation to occur, depending upon the ability of any individual to enter into such an honest sharing of self and to relate to a common purpose. In such communication not only does the individual find self-identity but the group (koinonia) finds its identity.

Another personal dynamic of relationship is the fact of challenge. In relationship one is able to state creatively his convictions. Having done so, he accepts the challenge and correctives of another's thoughts or convictions. The challenge is always to be creative enough to come to terms with the boundaries and limitations another's point of view may impose. The ability to accept challenge

is the mark of a developing person and this mark is essential to involvement in any shared or common experience.

Let us underscore at this point the fact that all depth relationships are a risk. Even those with whom we are closely associated are always potential adversaries to the self. Only through active, living communication, where the being and truth of the one meets the being and truth of the other, can love and acceptance be expressed that is essential to the being of both. However, one of the strengths of the team ministry is the knowledge that one can risk himself with others in the knowledge that behind every new venture into the jungle (the risk a new relationship) is the support of his team mate. One is not alone, but is sharing a foundation of trust and mutuality which supports him in "risk" situations. The importance of this "felt support" is seen in the hundred-and-one situations within the life of any church which call for a decision which can never be accepted by all. The decision, already shared by another, has the support of a previously tested foundation and can thus be presented in a positive way.

The depth relationships necessary for the establishment and development of a team ministry cause several things to occur. There is an ability to act with

decisiveness. The fact of the relationship allows forked-road choices (active decision) as opposed to hidden indecision. There is born a creative fidelity, a warm and enduring choice (common purpose) from which all other choices follow. We are forced off the balcony into the arena. We are no longer spectators but participants in the life-and-death struggle for meaning.

The fact of depth relationships, with all the involvement that is inherent in it, changes our perception from something external to something which is present in every experience. Life (ministry) is no longer a vague quest but a pilgrimage, it has purpose and direction. And, finally, depth relationships preclude any involved individual's talking from both sides of his mouth. He is called upon to be the truth he is known to be.

The personal dynamic of relationship as experienced in a team ministry is seen in the power derived from living a shared life and ministry. The loneliness which so often invaded our lives and inhibited our ability to function becomes more rare. The frustration of occasional fuzzy thinking is destroyed because the reaction of the other person is always available to sharpen and focus the blurred areas of decision and thought. The individual abilities of each member are strengthened as new ideas are accepted and used to support what already exists. The

sermon, so important to American Protestantism, becomes a more effective tool for witness because there is an honest sharing of ideas and responses before and after the presentation.

The greatest power of lived relationship, as seen in a team ministry is the living witness of two different individuals. The living witness, "the word became flesh," speaks more clearly of the dynamic of relationship than any words we ever say. The by-product is the fact that in the midst of these depth relationships the participants also receive the witness--"there am I also, in the midst of you." A by-product felt by the participants in the depths of relationship is the witness of the Spirit of God.

The person is a potential, a current of life which surges up continually, and which manifests itself in a fresh light at every new blossoming forth of life. At the creative moment of encounter with God or with another person, I in fact experience a double certainty: that of "discovering" myself, and also that of "changing." I find myself to be different from what I thought I was before. And yet at the same time I am certain that I am the same person, that it is the very same life which is thus welling up anew, that it was contained in my being as it was yesterday, even though then there was nothing that could lead me to support what I am discovering today.¹¹

¹¹ Tournier, op. cit., p. 237.

III. PRACTICAL ASPECTS

Having laid the foundation and sketched the personal fulfillment available in the team ministry, we move into the practical aspects of this venture into new arrangements within multiple staff settings. The question most frequently asked by clergymen and laymen alike is "who does the preaching?" This question points to a deeper concern. The deeper concern is the question, "Who is in charge?" In the mind of most people, clergymen and laymen, the authority resides in the individual who is doing the preaching. This problem, the problem of authority, is presented in Chapter VI. However, the answer to the first question is that all aspects of the ministry are shared.

The preaching schedule is arrived at by joint decisions on the part of the team ministers. This is not done on an every Sunday rotation basis but upon a projected program of preaching. Built into the program of preaching is the belief that no member of the team ministry should be out of the preaching ministry for more than six weeks. During our first year, partly for the purpose of education and partly because we were feeling our way, we were very careful to make sure that an even balance was maintained. This has become less important and is not now approached on the basis of equal time.

The preaching schedule is developed every six

months. Worship themes, sermon ideas, and sermon series, as well as possible dialogue sermons are discussed. After this, preaching assignments are agreed upon and a personal schedule is made. Sometimes one member is called upon to preach a series of sermons independent of the other. At other times a series is divided or shared in the hope that the different approach and style of each minister will add variety and depth to the series. A very definite plus factor is the opportunity in such a closely-related ministerial staff to present dialogue sermons. When the life of ministry is one of dialogue and there is developed a sense of equality of ministers, then a dialogue sermon can be presented without the weight of authority resting in a certain person, but in the validity of the position or positions expressed. Also, because dialogue is so integral to the relationship of the staff members its presentation in the form of a sermon is natural and not forced or phony.

The key word, we feel, in the preaching program of any team ministry is flexibility. The approach is one of sharing ideas with the hope that the dialogue which preceded the sermon within the team will continue between the team and the congregation. The dialogue which precedes and follows the sermon presentation helps to sharpen the individual clergyman's ability to proclaim "the word." The fact that the preaching schedule is shared and that

one is freed from the pressure of weekly sermon preparation makes deeper and more meaningful sermons possible. At the same time our times of uninterrupted preparation and study does not mean that the pastoral needs of the congregation go unheeded--they are assumed by the other member of the team. The knowledge that there are available times of uninterrupted study and preparation without any neglect of the much-needed ministry of pastoral care creates a greater ability on the part of the preacher to be prophetic and creative in his proclamations to the people. The awareness of adequate time gives a greater incentive to explore more deeply into one's faith, or in scriptural terms "to launch out into the deep."

It should be noted here that our policy, in a two-member team ministry, is that the one who delivers the sermon is freed from other responsibilities within the worship service. This means that adequate preparation can be given to the other aspects of worship, as well as the sermon. When the sermon and all other parts of the corporate worship are born out of a common ministry there is present a feeling of oneness so important to a moving worship experience.

Having suggested ways in which an important, but preliminary, question is answered we move to a discussion of another practical aspect of a team ministry. One of the

goals of most churches is a feeling of continuity not only in program but in ministry. The greatest frustrations seem to arise when there is no leadership. The underlying concept of a team ministry is every minister (clergyman) engaged in a total ministry and not competing with any other member for position or prestige. This means every clergyman working toward common goals, carrying his share of the responsibility, and maintaining a sense of the totality and equality of all who share in the team ministry. When balance is found there is an awareness on the part of the congregation that all the ministers are sharing a common ministry and that anyone of the team represents the whole team. As this awareness develops, though the degree varies with each individual member of the congregation, a request for "their" pastor is not a request for a specific man but for either member of their team ministry. This means that a continuity is established and that only on very rare occasions is that congregation without a pastor.

What can this mean to a local congregation? It can mean that the members of a congregation are not requested to repress or shelve needs during the summer or during times of ministerial vacations. Neither are they asked to "settle" for the services of the assistant. At least one of their pastors is always available. There is no need to

decide whether it is important enough to call "the pastor" back from somewhere, one of their pastors is there ministering in terms of a common ministry to which they are related. The team ministry concept has a built-in continuity which puts the congregation at ease and allows for a total ministry to the congregation for twelve months of the year.

The other side of this coin is refreshingly obvious, at least to the ministers. When there is no need to call "the pastor" back for some crisis or problem situation, there is an opportunity for any member of the ministerial staff to plan and enjoy an uninterrupted day away or an uninterrupted vacation. Also, because there are in operation predetermined programs and goals, the often-present worry about the church while one is not present recedes faster and further. A time of relaxation and pleasure with the family can be exactly that. This would be a new feeling for many pastors who have labored long and hard in the vineyard, even during their vacations.

This practical aspect of a team ministry which has, as we have said, two sides, is in itself a dynamic. Once the feeling of a continuing ministry is caught there is a decline in the feeling of "closed for the summer," so often evidenced. The vitality, so necessary to ministry, is maintained because the program is not started, then

stopped, and started again. This awareness of a continual pastoral ministry is, we feel, an important aspect of the team ministry.

"There is power in numbers!" How often we have heard that statement, but it is true. Jesus knew this when he sent the "seventy" out two by two.¹² Each was able to gain strength from the other as they went out into the villages. So it is with the team concept. Each member of the team in relationship with the other gains courage and strength. It is easier to engage in any given program, project, or aspect of his ministry to people when he knows that he has additional support in the ideas, energy, and fellowship of a partner. Having begun a project, there is added support in the knowledge that one is not an unexpendable part; he can thus remove his energies knowing that another can step in and continue the project. This means that the "reins" of various projects do not become "shackles" and can be passed on without losing ground or destroying what one is seeking to build. While this may seem a small thing, it can become very important and this team support injects "the courage to try" into many situations that might otherwise lie dormant.

Another practical aspect which broadens the horizons

¹²Luke 10:1.

of personal fulfillment is our program of shared reading. It has been our policy to read different books and articles and to share our own insights regarding our reading. Sometimes we are so captured by a certain book that we encourage the other to read it and discussion centers around our understanding of the book. This means that we cover a great deal more written material, and the insights shared in the resultant dialogue take on even greater meaning. The reading program, as required as any other aspect of our relationship, results in a better stewardship of reading time and the new insights gleaned from the writings strengthen the whole ministry, but especially the preaching program. It also means that we do not both waste time reading the same poor book.

Every minister, who is a pastor or shepherd to his people, has many opportunities for counseling. At times the load can become staggering. In the team ministry this function is also shared. People are told that all aspects of our ministry are shared, and that while confidences are held outside the ministerial staff, there is discussion and sharing within the team. This consultation does two important things. It allows for additional insights for the counselor from his partner and it makes possible interim counseling sessions with the other pastor when the primary counselor is not available. On rare occasions a

counselee develops a too-great dependence upon a specific counselor and a staff of equally trained and respected pastors allows for a strategic switch from one to another with a minimum of frustration. As we have stressed throughout this dissertation, this kind of working relationship demands constant honest dialogue. This sometimes means a painful re-living of certain situations, but issues forth in deeper relationships and positive development toward health or wholeness.

Another often-asked question is, "Who takes the funerals?" "Who has the weddings?" The answer to that question is, "That depends upon the specific situation." It has become policy that whenever a funeral or wedding is held for any of the active members of the congregation, we both participate. This is to help highlight the team relationship that exists. The smoothness with which two or more ministers work together is graphically demonstrated in such times as these. Often from the community comes a request to conduct a funeral or a wedding service; on these occasions the selection of a minister depends either upon personal preference or availability. No effort is made to equalize these ministerial services.

What minister is not flooded with requests to do this and that, or to go here and there? These important opportunities can be shared in the team ministry without

those making the request feeling that they got second best if their original choice is not possible. The team concept allows for diversity in those specific ministries required by the modern church. We do not duplicate our witness away from the local congregation. One can center on the community while the other engages in the activities of the denomination beyond the local congregation. We do not serve on the same committees because we know that the witness of each represents the whole ministry.

Another practical aspect of the team ministry is the protection that is available. Not only is there strength in numbers, there is power of a different sort when the integrity and character of one is defended by the other. A close relationship stands as an ever present help in time of tension and trouble. Our experience tells us that often within a team ministry there will be those who will seek to separate. Some are not even aware of their need to do so. With a sense of oneness built into the relationship the team mate can at one and the same time approach the problem from a subjective and objective point of view. From this stance he can begin to deal creatively with the problem. By advising the other minister of the problem, they can work together toward a positive solution. This knowledge of protection takes a great deal of the feeling of loneliness out of the ministry. One is never

called upon to stand alone. Problems and issues are faced together and resolved in a way that is usually much more healthy for all concerned in the struggle.

Because the entire concept of a team ministry depends upon the ability of a mature congregation to accept two or more ministers on an equal basis, and the ability of two or more ministers to accept with Christian grace the variety of uneven responses and expressions of divers-giving loyalties of the members of the congregation; and because there are always exceptional situations which test these abilities, certain safeguards are built into the team ministry. Some of these are readily apparent in the document of the team ministry found in Appendix I, while some are not a part of the document because they are a part of a personal working relationship. However, because these safeguards are important some are presented for the first time in this document.

The first safeguard is related to the question most often asked, "Who will be preaching?" It is our policy that the preaching schedule is never made public. We have often referred to it as the most closely guarded secret in the United States. This is done so that the disposition to choose one as apposed to the other, and come only when "the favorite" is preaching, is impossible. This is another effort to protect the concept of team ministry,

and to eliminate the possibility of building two congregations within a single organizational structure. The weekly church paper and the Sunday worship bulletin never announce who is to preach. The only designation with regard to any minister's participation is the word "minister."

Another safeguard which strengthens the concept of team ministry and creates occasional guessing games among the congregation, is our practice to sign everything jointly. We assign certain writing responsibilities, such as our weekly column called "Team Trails" and then both sign. Often, people try to guess who wrote which part. More often than not, they are wrong. As a matter of fact, and as a humorous aside, our wives are very often confused as to the authorship of certain "joint" articles or letters. While there is some humor and a great deal of guessing involved, we find the experience tends to deepen the congregation's appreciation of the team and strengthen the idea of its unity.

Another policy which we feel is an important safeguard is that of always clearing with each other on outside assignments and responsibilities. It is often necessary to establish a priority in order that the right ministries are carried out. We feel that because we are sharing one ministry it is important that we are continually aware of the direction and plans anticipated.

The families, while not highlighted in this dissertation, are an important part of any team ministry. There are safeguards there also. Not only do each of the ministers spend time with his own family, but it is important that both families spend time together. We feel that it is vital to the well-being of the team concept that the mutuality extend beyond the clergymen to their families. While we have not worked out a schedule in any precise way, we do seek to spend time together often. It is also important to share together as couples and this we do with more than monthly regularity. We do this because a common ministry is impossible apart from an enveloping mutuality.

The final safeguard is in many ways less important than the others and in other ways more important. Connected with the various invitations to speak, the weddings, and the funerals are honorariums. If the concept of equal salaries and equal compensations is to be kept, a system must be followed. Our policy has been that all fees and honorariums are deposited in a special account which we administer jointly. The funds that accumulate are used in various ways, but generally for special church projects or the purchase of books. However, this special fund is also used for special entertainment for our families. By handling the funds in this way there is no need to rotate certain ministerial functions which might involve honorariums.

Relationship is dynamic. After all is written about the personal fulfillment of the team ministry and all the practical aspects of the team ministry are exhausted, we are still left with the indescribable fact that relationship is dynamic and not static. All the safeguards and outlines available cannot build or maintain a relationship such as is necessary for a team ministry and neither can all the negative feelings and fears of others destroy a relationship grounded in openness and trust.

We are convinced that the team ministry is one vital answer to the problem of the urban church and multiple staffs. We feel sure that we are enjoying the frontier of an emerging concept of the continual evolution of man from individual to intra-personal man. If Pierre Teilhard de Chardin is correct that "inter-thinking humanity" is the pull of the future then we proudly claim a part of that discovery in our experience.

Teilhard de Chardin points out, after that critical point has been passed, evolution takes on a new character, that of psycho-social process, based on the cumulative transmission of experience and it results in order to develop new patterns of cooperation among individuals for gaining knowledge, enjoyment and social control. This points to the supreme importance of personality as the culmination of two major evolutionary trends--the trend toward more extreme individualism, and that toward more extensive inter-relation and cooperation. A developed human being is not merely a more highly individualized entity, but one whose self-consciousness makes him potentially, highly flexible in his ways of relating himself to his external environment. Just as the evolutionary trend leads to the differentiation of a head as the guiding

region of the body (containing the main sense organs providing information about the inner world, and the main organ of coordination, the brain), so now the incipient development of man into a single psychosocial unit with a common pool of thought is providing men in social groupings with the rudiments of a head.

On the basis of this evolutionary trend we might consider inter-thinking humanity as a new type of organism whose destiny is to realize new possibilities for cooperative living on this planet. Such a destiny might be described in general terms as the global unity of mankind's mental activity--the unity of spirit and purpose, but with a high degree of variety within that unity. In this, personal integration and internal harmony, good will and cooperation among men, and increasing knowledge are basic if we are to understand ourselves and the world, and exercise some control or guidance. It means to me, coming into fruitful and significant relationship with the enduring processes of the universe, and by discovering the possibilities of fulfillment still open, entering into the dynamism as co-workers with God.¹³

¹³Frank Kimper, "Class Reactions from Seminar on Prayer" (Claremont, California, June 19, 1964), citing Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 14.

CHAPTER VI

RELATIONSHIP AND AUTHORITY

Perhaps the most valuable insight we have gained in the team relationship is into the true nature of authority. It disturbed us even before we came to the Van Nuys Central Christian Church though we were not aware that it was the problem of authority disturbing us at the time. One of the long-time leaders in the congregation reacted vigorously against the team concept on the basis that "someone" had to retain the "final" authority. Otherwise, he felt, there would be conflict and disaster. This leader left the church before we arrived on the staff. Largely due to the insistence of this individual we were "forced" to re-evaluate our original plan to meet the requirements of the local committee. This was accomplished as we set up a "chairman of staff," a position which rotated annually. As distinguished from the normally-accepted "pecking order"¹ in church staffs, this "chairman" is the person who is working with Christian Education during that particular

¹This normally accepted pecking order to which reference is made is evident in a large majority of our churches. The Pastoral minister, who predominates in preaching and worship, is elevated far above the second-class citizenship of those persons whose ministry is devoted to Christian education or other specialized areas.

year. The team member who is responsible for worship is by-passed for this reason.

In our three and one-half years at the Van Nuys church, it has never been necessary for the "chairman of staff" to exercise his authority in such a way that he was standing against the other members of the staff. It is our feeling that the moment such action might be necessary, the true dynamic of the team concept will be lost. The key to authority lies within our concept of the church as organism and is strengthened by the entire emphasis on inter-relatedness.

Daniel Day Williams sets forth our basic problem when he says,

When we speak of authority in the Christian faith and ministry, we must see that authority through its source in the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is to say that our authority derives from Him whose claim rests finally on nothing other than the sheer expression of love to God and to men, which is to see it rests finally on personal relationship to God and man. We do not agree in the Christian Church about the proper forms of authority in the ministry; but whatever they may be, we cannot escape the truth that God in his decisive word to us has left us no ultimate reliance upon institution or tradition save that which arises from personal trust in Him.²

In the light of such an analysis it would seem to be better to dispense with all titles implying authority

²Daniel D. Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961), p. 50. Words in italics are added by the writers of this dissertation.

or function or role and refer to each person as a minister of the church. Each day the personal relationships of persons involved in a multiple staff stand under the judgment of the gospel to which they have made a commitment and for which they have become responsible in action. Such acknowledgment is not a denial of the imperfection of any human relationship, but only a realistic beginning.

It is to be admitted that one's personal concept of authority is largely dependent upon the kind of person he is. There are certain persons who feel the need to be an authority, even the authority, while others require an authority outside themselves. Also, any study of the problem of authority would be incomplete without some insight into the current cultural importance placed upon status and prestige. In addition, Daniel Williams' statement suggests that one cannot understand authority apart from what Macmurray calls "acting rightly" or with intentionality. According to Macmurray

acting rightly--is either a matter of efficiency or a matter of style; and we may note that both criteria can be used in the evaluation of any action, and that which of the two standards is the subordinate one will depend on whether the end or the means is subordinate in the intentionality of the action.³

Authority within the church staff can be fully

³John Macmurray, Persons in Relation (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 114.

understood only in terms of need, intention, and standards on the part of individual ministers on a given staff. The valuation of any authoritative decision, and its resultant action, can be explained only when one is aware of the intentionality of the decision. The problem of end versus means plagues many a staff which has a basis of authority that is invalid.

The first, and most commonly accepted understanding of authority is that it must reside in a person or a group of persons in a hierarchy of command. Not only is this "expected line of authority" deeply entrenched in the modern business world, it has its roots in the life of the Christian community also, at least as far back as the early New Testament tradition.

The mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be

served but, to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."⁴

This passage hints at the struggle among the followers of Jesus with the question of authority. Not only were James and John involved, the other "ten" were upset when they "heard it." Their insight into the ministry of Jesus had not yet deepened to the point where they could see that his authority was closely tied to his relation to God and to persons. They still reflect the common belief that authority is given to a person and expressed through a "chain of command."

The junior - senior type of staff structure in the church is based on this understanding of authority. Characteristically the senior figure is in full and final control of the local church situation. He is definitely the authority in many areas of the church's life, but it is to be noted that the extension of his authority would, in all probability, include all other areas also, if he so desired. The assistant, on the other hand, generally functions within a limited framework and with little authority. In many such situations the problem of the relationship of staff assistants to the local "power structure" is never squarely faced. Often the official board members, who with the senior minister evaluate the

⁴Matthew 20:20-28.

assistant's services and make the important decisions that affect him and his work, are persons who have little first-hand contact with the assistant or his program. Even when there is the general feeling on the part of laymen that the pastor is "hard to work with," the fact that he is the "boss" is reason enough to support him against the rest of the staff. Within such a structure, where the assistant is viewed as "hired help" and is thus judged by different criteria from the pastor, the junior staff member has little recourse in an honest disagreement.

This problem is heightened by the changing view of the ministry that is reflected in the change in seminary training. Many of our older ministers were prepared in their education to fill the accepted authoritative role the minister has traditionally held in the local congregation. The younger ministers, on the other hand, have been prepared to share with their people in the process of developing. Their education has emphasized a deep understanding of persons, equipping them with the tools of democratic process and small group work. The attempt is to grow with and to rely on the decisions of the lay ministry. One readily sees the problem of authority involved, therefore, when the assistant who, because he works with leaders and with groups through democratic and educational processes for arriving at ways of action, and generally does so with

no clearly enunciated policy for guidance, then finds the committee process short circuited by fiat, based on decisions made by a higher board which the pastor moderates and controls. Each time this occurs the status of the assistant, and the initiative and interest of the laity, decline.

A highly authority-centered ministry tends to get into its lay leadership a disproportionate percentage of "other-directed" persons who prefer to act and decide without ever thinking through the "whys." Such persons like the taste of power without the spiritual and moral responsibility which comes from real sensitivity to the needs, feelings, and responses of persons and without having to think about goals and purposes.

Closely related to this problem of authority is the subjective need for status. The status position of each individual member of the ministerial staff largely determines the value placed upon his services by the laity. This problem is compounded as differences of status within the staff begin to permeate the entire church family. Sooner or later the membership breaks down into members who have a vital contact with "the" minister, and "second class" members who can look only to the assistants for the fulfillment of their needs.

Often it is to be noted that the primary motivation

of the pastor to gain additional staff is that it is a mark of success and prestige. There is no doubt that often the only reason that the pastor presses for staff is that he feels that as "chief of staff" he would gain status. Around him, perhaps, are churches of similar size with assistants and he feels he ought to have one. Such motivation is, of course, a poor foundation for proper staff relationships. This is especially true since this same motivation causes the pastor to retain all of the authority. A close look at the actual "power structure" of the church will determine the amount of authority the pastor has released to the assistant. In official board meetings does the assistant have the privilege of discussion? Is he permitted to express his own opinions on policy? The assistant usually works with certain functional committees of the board, but does his influence come directly to the board through these committees, or must he first clear everything with the pastor?

Herman Sweet cites an example of a particular pastor whose staff relationships suffer due to the problem of authority.⁵ The man is highly directive in his administrative leadership. He is able to maintain good personal relations with his lay leadership, but in the area of

⁵Herman J. Sweet, The Multiple Staff in the Local Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 78.

administration he dominates almost completely. His decisions are based on past experience and usually reflect the "obvious, the practical, and the institutionally correct solution to problems." This pastor is not sensitive to the "feeling" response of persons and the laity are not led to think through to their own conclusions. Since his decisions have such a high degree of correctness, they are seldom questioned even though they are not mutual decisions. "Whatever skills he has in the care of souls, and they are considerable, are always secondary in his official administrative relationships."⁶ He maintains the image of the popular, and successful business leader to whom subordinates respond enthusiastically, albeit with some loss of personal integrity and self worth.

This approach tends to gather into the church officialdom those who like institutional success. They develop a kind of pseudo churchmanship. They love to see the church grow in numbers. They rejoice in successful, well attended activities. They like the balanced budget, with a non-too-severe scrutiny of the portion going to benevolences. They enjoy seeing the plant improved in appearance and in comfort.⁷

Such a pastor, Sweet suggests, could be a better head of staff if he could recognize the limitations that are present in his apparently successful administration, and feel the imperative to surround himself with additional staff who could work within the organizational pattern he

⁶Ibid., p. 79.

⁷Ibid.

so ably provides, but who have much greater sensitivity to the way persons develop in decision making. The problem is that his status and prestige image most often will not permit it. Instead such a person looks for assistants who follow his same pattern and have the same success image he has. The warmer and more responsive type of relationship, that assistants with greater sensitivity elicit from the laity, constitute a threat to both status and prestige.

It would be unfair for us to leave the impression that the problem lies with the senior pastor; it really lies in the nature and understanding of authority itself. Oftentimes the assistant, who has neither the status nor the authority of the senior pastor, is expected to accomplish what the pastor has not been able to do. The pastor often unwittingly assigns to the assistant certain responsibilities without being aware that the status and authority required to fulfill them are lacking. The pastor might fully intend for each assigned responsibility to carry with it the necessary authority to assure success, but in the eyes of the laity an authority figure in reality cannot "give" his authority to another of less status. Thus the assistant in fact, and often with no malice intended, has increased responsibilities with no authority to insure even partial success. A good example of this is the assistant who is responsible for a heavy program load in the area of

Christian education without having the status and authority necessary for enlisting volunteer workers. It can simply be stated that while the senior pastor can readily "turn over" certain aspects of program to an assistant, he cannot pass along authority commensurate with the demands of the increased responsibility.

The problem of authority also directly affects the level of communication. Administrative and supervisory effectiveness cannot be sustained without good communication. It has already been noted that honest communication is based upon valid personal relationship. When such relationship is inhibited by a power struggle involving individual identity, status, and prestige, then communication breaks down. Neither side truly "reveals" nor "listens." When this occurs, administrative decisions issued from the source of authority often seem to be arbitrary and unfair.

Herman Sweet suggests that when tensions arise within the senior minister - assistant structure, the assistant should leave. "In far the larger proportion of cases when there is incompatibility, it is the assistant who should move, even though the weight of justice may be on his side."⁸ With this view we are in basic disagreement. Sweet feels that, in contending with the pastor,

⁸Ibid., p. 53.

the assistant might harm the church. This, of course, is only one possibility which must be weighed against others. Perhaps, in the long run, the church would benefit from such tension if it leads to a greater awareness of the nature of authority as it relates to church staff and congregation. If the only reason for an assistant's leaving quietly is that he is lower on the authority scale, and because any alternative course might ripple the water, then such a solution would hardly bring about healthy results. Rather, it would simply entrench more deeply the role of power and authority, and suggest that the "lower" people in the world should always "give in" to avoid tension even when "truth" is on their side. Far from hurting the church, facing up to the tensions involved realistically the assistant might cause the church to examine itself. Only in this way can the church combat the situation in which a single senior minister goes through a rapid succession of assistants. Then, even though the assistant finally leaves, it can hardly be said that nothing constructive has occurred.

There are always problems involved when authority is invested in a single person. If an assistant must win status and authority commensurate with his abilities and responsibilities, it cannot be denied that he faces an uphill pull. The very fact that in this type of staff

structure the symbol of authority often plays the "god" role in getting rid of assistants who threaten his status proves that authority thus placed is easily misused. Even when an honest attempt is made by the "head of staff" and the assistant to cooperate in a full ministry, the nature of authority role prevents their cooperating to the fullest extent.

The problem of authority, then, will be solved only as valid solutions to the multiple staff are found. Some authorities seem to feel that revising structure and organization among staff personnel will solve the problem. Indeed, it seems to us that any move toward democracy in the churches would help improve the functioning of multiple staffs. When specialized staffs function together on the basis of a commonly understood policy, individual ministers are freed to some extent to differ in details. This is certainly to be preferred to the situation where a lack of commonly-accepted policy and purpose prohibits the staff from acting freely and results in endless confusion and conflict. However, there are several drawbacks to vesting authority in one person when considered in the light of a multiple ministry based upon common purpose alone. First, common purpose and policy alone are not enough. This solution is too mechanical and ignores the way persons actually function. When a new staff is being formed, even

when special attention is given to the discussion of common goals and purpose to which each minister will respond in the light of his specialty, each participating staff person is free to interpret this goal in the light of his own subjectivity. Without something more than mere policy or even commonly accepted purpose, the problem of authority still rages unharnessed. Within such a structure each individual can still be lost in his subjectivity. Theoretically each is free to interpret the policy in his own way. Practically speaking, of course, an individual is never free to act upon his own subjective interpretation, at least for very long. In such a situation authority asserts itself to bring order out of chaos. When this occurs, however, a democratic resolution of conflict is denied.

A second problem in terms of the specialized group ministry is that the "final" or "ultimate" authority usually resides in one person or "chief of staff." The only alternative to this is a ministry in which authority seems to be divided in terms of specialization. When the former is true, many of the same problems involving status and prestige which plague the senior - assistant type of multiple staff find their expression here. If the latter is true, authority seems to be divided, and actually may be, so that the "wholeness" of ministry, so needed by urban man, is denied. The church as an organism is fragmented

into several competing parts.

The real solution to the problem of authority must reach much deeper than common policy and purpose. It must reflect a "wholeness" in the ministry which supports rather than denies the concept of the church as a dynamic organism. Thus, the problem of authority cannot be solved apart from the establishment of honest relationship. Such relationship is to be understood as a blending of two or more unique personalities "around which certain vital energies are constellated and bound."⁹ Thus, while the awareness of inter-relatedness and co-participation both attracts and opens up many new vital possibilities for ministry, there is no denial of individual integrity and identity. But such a relationship is always a risk. It involves two or more inter-related persons, dynamic in character and possessing volcanic centers of energy which explode from time to time; and only within such a setting can true development and creation occur. It is a relationship of tension. Tension is that dynamic principle which seeks to keep things in proper perspective through the balancing of opposing forces. Thus, within the tension of relationship, each exists as a unique integrity and at the same time is freed to a total ministry. When this occurs,

⁹H. Westman, The Springs of Creativity (New York: Atheneum, 1961), p. 64.

authority does not exist in either person on the staff, but rather in the relationship itself which frees them both to minister. This is especially important when the church is viewed as an organism that is seeking to maintain or achieve "wholeness." At this point the love ethic of the New Testament Church is applicable to the modern church. There is an authority in the love relationship between persons which frees and heals even beyond their involvement in the relationship. "To inhibit or prevent the expression of love is to do violence to the needs, to the structure, and to functioning of the organism. To love and to be loved is as necessary to the organism as the breathing of air."¹⁰

Here one is open to the possibilities to be discovered when authority is vested in a relationship of mutual honesty, trust, and love.

In the first place, one discovers that such relationship, if authority is to dwell within it, must exist within the larger concept of organismic wholeness. With such an awareness dawns the insight that one is not independent, but rather, that he is interdependent with every other aspect of creation. Man was not created to be independent, for such a belief denies man's mutual

¹⁰John B. Magee, Reality and Prayer (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 63, citing Ashley Montagu, "The

participation with God in continuing creation. Man was created to be free, and only the frank acknowledgment of interdependence within the framework of relationship brings into being the concept of authority which makes such freedom possible. "If the terminus a quo of the personal life is a helpless total dependence on the other, the terminus ad quem is not independence, but a mutual interdependence of equals."¹¹ Using a combination of New Testament and Tillichian symbolism, this might be illustrated by stating that God is the Ground of Being, Jesus is the vine with his roots deep down into God, and men are the branches which bear fruit only in their common relatedness through the vine to the root, the source of nourishment. The authority which brings development and freedom does not reside in a particular branch, even though it is higher on the vine, but rather it resides in the relationship of each part to every other within the total organism.

When this dynamic occurs, every member of a staff is freed to act as a unique individual who acts with integrity. Action, as has been stated, is most important and is only to be understood in terms of its intention. Authority has a vital connection in this respect. The action is performed

Origin and Meaning of Love," Pastoral Psychology, IV
(June, 1953), 51.

¹¹Macmurray, op. cit., p. 66.

by a unique, free agent, but the intention of that action is grounded in an acknowledged relationship. "An action is defined by its intention, and its absolute rightness must lie, therefore, in the rightness of its intention. . . . The moral rightness of an action, therefore, has its ground in the relation of persons."¹²

It is the contention of this study that more men will be willing to risk a shared ministry only when status and prestige are equal because they are grounded in an authoritative relationship. This is not to say that every member of the staff has equal authority. Actually ability and training vary, so that the authority of one's witness may vary considerably from one area to another, but it is to assert that on the basis of ability, training, witness, and concern their authority has a common ground of relationship and that common ground permeates every area of church life.

Earlier it was admitted that all ministers could not function within a situation involving so much risk. Herman Sweet defines the type of man required for such a dynamic endeavor,

A man with great sensitivity to persons, a man who radiates love and gentleness, a man mature and secure so that he does not need to cultivate status or honor for himself. And it is a joy to see how each of these

¹²Ibid., p. 116.

men loves and respects and trusts the other so as actually to complement each other without a hint of jealousy or rivalry. In responding to one man, no parishioner would ever be likely to feel disloyal to the other or feel any conflict of loyalties. This is as it should be, but it must be admitted that it takes men of stature to achieve this kind of harmony in ministry.¹³

These characteristics are important, for many persons will be attracted to the team concept whose personal needs and insecurities will prohibit a full understanding of the dynamic involved. Two men from our Brotherhood spent several hours with us exploring the Team ministry. They had in mind the formation of another similar staff relationship. One man was already ministering to the congregation being considered. The second individual was a well trained specialist in the field of Christian education. Our discussion boiled down to the problem of authority, which the minister already at the church was determined to keep for himself. His concept of a team was the harnessing of a "fair" horse to a "lead" horse. This is a denial of the team concept which might also be referred to as a co-ministry. This individual, and many others, will be unable to see that authority can reside in relationship and that they will personally experience a new freedom to act responsibly when it does.

The search for spiritual unity within the staff soon

¹³Sweet, op. cit., p. 81.

confronts the congregation with the demand for similar relationships among the groups which comprise it.

To the priestly and prophetic ministries of the Church we may add the ministry of reconciliation. Such a ministry seeks to create an atmosphere of agreement and harmony in the midst of human diversity, and the fostering of a climate of problem-solving rather than bitter competition or open violence. . . . Reconciliation requires, furthermore, the ability to appreciate truth in many diverse forms and to see and affirm the underlying unity of humanity in God.¹⁴

When authority resides not in an individual but in a dynamic relationship, real encouragement and support are given to the current trend in American Protestantism toward a stronger lay-ministry. The layman can no longer remain "other-centered" as he can with an outside authority. Very soon this freedom for action, which characterizes the team staff, permeates the life of the laity of the church and beyond into the life of the community. As the people become aware of the fact that authority resides in relationship rather than in a person, their relationships begin to deepen; they discover an authority with a common-ground "relationship" which frees them to act. They experience life for the first time in terms of its wholeness and the dissecting aspect of urban life is counter-acted.

We can be the deadening conformity and flight from responsibility that is suburban and organization man

¹⁴Magee, op. cit., p. 5.

today or we can be the confrontation which brings the message of salvation to others and works salvation in our own lives.¹⁵

. . . speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly /is in relationship/, makes for growth and upbuilds in love.¹⁶

¹⁵Arnold B. Come, Agents of Reconciliation
(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), p. 37.

¹⁶Ephesians 4:15-16.

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APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTION TO A TEAM MINISTRY

REQUIREMENTS

The entire concept of a team ministry depends upon the ability of a mature congregation to accept two or more ministers on an equal basis and the ability of two or more ministers to accept the variety of uneven responses and expressions of diverging loyalties of the members with Christian grace. To aid in this process, we feel that certain requirements must be met by each member of the ministerial staff.

Their educational backgrounds must be equal, a suggested minimum of a Bachelor of Divinity or Master of Theology Degree being required. In addition, there should be a similarity of church background experience. Also, the ages of these men should be nearly the same. Finally, while it is not important that all members of the ministerial staff have identical theological outlooks, it is imperative that they have an established interpersonal relationship which is based on acceptance and Christian love. This is essential because the ministerial staff must always function as a unit.

All members of the ministerial staff must be responsible to the same body. (Suggested--the Board of Elders as the spiritual leaders of the church.)

TEAM MINISTRY

REQUIREMENTS

OUR CONCEPT OF THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH and
OUR PURPOSE IN THIS VENTURE (Team Ministry)

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

SALARIES, COMPENSATIONS, AND EXPENSES

TERMINATION OF SERVICES, AND DURATION OF MINISTRY

ADDITIONAL STAFF (secretarial and ministerial)

OUR CONCEPT OF THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

1. To communicate the Christian Gospel of love through the lives of the membership.
2. To lay emphasis upon the importance and the place of the individual.
3. To continually hold relationship with God and with each other as the central fact of the Christian Church. (This means that program becomes a tool which is always secondary in importance to a continuing relationship.)
4. To recognize the importance and the value of the small group approach in the attempt to reach persons.

OUR PURPOSE IN THIS VENTURE (team ministry)

1. To share with one another in a new concept of the ministry. (team.)
2. To help persons become aware of the many important aspects of a total ministry.
3. To meet more adequately the needs of persons through the Christian Gospel.
4. To make meaningful a rotating, specialized, multiple ministry.
5. To co-operate--rather than compete.

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES (projected)

(departmental responsibilities will be rotated annually
among the ministerial staff)

CONGREGATION (b)*

OFFICIAL BOARD (b)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (b) (a2)*

OUTREACH (1a)
Social Action

EDUCATION (2a)

WORSHIP (1a)

STEWARDSHIP (2a)

MEMBERSHIP (1a)

PROPERTY (2a)

PUBLICITY (b)

Chairman of ELDERS (b)
Evangelism

CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES (b)

FELLOWSHIP PRESIDENTS (CMF: CWF: SOY: CYF:
(b))

Note: This organization of responsibility chart is based on the functional plan suggested by our Brotherhood. It is recognized that most churches have made variations to meet local needs. Alterations can easily be made to fit any specific constitution or by-laws.

*KEY:
1 or 2--indicates
division of
responsibility
b--indicates both
ministers
a--indicates annual
rotation

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY (continued)

It will be necessary in this team ministry that all administrative (ministerial) decisions and responsibilities be shared by the entire ministerial staff. It will also be the responsibility of the total ministerial staff to minister to the needs of the congregation and community. (To share the pastoral responsibilities, i.e., weddings, funerals, counseling, sick calls, preaching, etc.). Certain other responsibilities will be shared with respect to the special abilities of the ministerial staff.

PULPIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Due to the concept of the team ministry, in which you have several men of equal competence and experience, it would be beneficial to the congregation to have this responsibility shared. While this is not to suggest that there will be a weekly rotation, never should any member of the ministerial staff be out of the pulpit for more than four to six weeks.

EXTRA RESPONSIBILITIES

It must also be recognized that there are other responsibilities to which your ministerial staff must put themselves fully to represent you and the church to the world. However, it is suggested that insofar as possible these outside duties be equal. It is also suggested that all outside responsibilities affecting the ministerial staff be reviewed and passed on by the Board of Elders.

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY (continued)

POSSIBLE AREAS OF OUTSIDE RESPONSIBILITY

1. Area Work:
 - a. area boards and committees
 - b. conference programs (summer)
 - c. district responsibilities
 - d. possibility of the necessity of sharing this new concept of the ministry through Dr. Parrott to the other churches of Southern California
 - e. participation in the Southern California Disciple Minister's fellowship
2. Interdenominational
3. Local:
 - a. ministerial association
 - b. community service projects
4. Interest in the Southern California School of Theology, and our concern for the education of Disciple ministerial students to meet the needs of the Christian Churches of Southern California

SALARIES, COMPENSATIONS, AND EXPENSES

Due to this new concept of the ministry, which is based upon the idea that every member of the ministerial staff should have equal training, experience, and education, it is imperative that each minister receives the same compensations. When the time comes that increases in salary are considered, the entire ministerial staff must be considered as one unit.

In addition to salary, as is the custom with the Christian Churches, the local church also has responsibility of supporting the ministers in the Pension Fund and of supplying Convention expenses.

Each minister shall be entitled to an annual vacation of one month, to be cleared through the Board of Elders.

It is our hope to maintain one and one-half days per week with our families. Since we both have small children in school, it is our wish that the half-day be Saturday afternoon. The other day to be arranged according to the church calendar.

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

If at anytime the congregation wishes to terminate the services of one of the ministers, it will automatically terminate the services of the other also. If, however, one or more ministers have been added to the staff and are requested to remain at the termination of one of the ministers such a program could be considered. This would depend upon the reason and circumstances for the termination of the individual minister.

DURATION OF MINISTRY

It is our hope that this team ministry (co-ministry) will be of indefinite duration. However, it seems essential that at the beginning of this enterprise a minimum of three years be established. At the end of this time a comprehensive and impartial evaluation will be conducted to determine the success or failure of this team ministry. If at that time the evaluation is negative a ninety day (90) notice of termination is requested by the ministers involved.

ADDITIONAL STAFF (secretarial and ministerial)

A. Secretarial: (a projection)

1. one full-time receptionist--with responsibilities in mimeographing and general office work
2. at least one half-time private secretary to be shared by the ministers in personal correspondence, etc.

B. Ministerial: (a projection)

1. Due to the concept of a team ministry, there is no reason to limit the ministerial staff to two persons. Indeed, the ministerial staff should grow to meet the growth and the needs that accompany growth in the community. When a full-time person is added to the ministerial staff he becomes a part of the ministerial unit, and is to be considered on an equal with the existing staff. However, several requirements need to be mentioned in addition to those already indicated:
 - a. a minister joining the staff will begin at the same salary as the present staff members now receive. After his arrival, salary raises are to be commensurate with those given the other ministers.
 - b. due to the relationship and rapport within the ministerial staff that is required for an effective team ministry, any new additions must be acceptable to the existing ministerial staff first. However, the final acceptance of such a person rests with the congregation.
2. Because of our firm belief in the importance of a youth ministry we hope that consideration will be given to a part-time youth directorship in the future. (Perhaps a ministerial student.)

APPENDIX II

James W. Pierson and William W. Carpenter
launch team ministry at California Church

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER

by

Elaine Hunt

Two young men stood, each with a fist full of alphabet letters, before the bulletin board on the front lawn of the church. They had spelled out the unique legend, James W. Pierson and William W. Carpenter--Team Ministry. As between them the words took shape, Central Christian Church in Van Nuys, California, became a willing test site for a revolutionary idea.

For the newly ordained ministers it was the concrete beginning of a dream they had held since early seminary days. They had "hashed" it over between them, written papers on it, and gladly explained the technicalities of the plan to anyone who asked. But they admitted that the idea would probably remain on paper; no church would dare to let them try it.

They had reckoned without the vision of James Parrott, executive secretary of Christian Churches in Southern California. Bill and Jim had made an appointment with him to explain this untried theory and why they believed in it. As they arrived that morning to keep their half-hour appointment, Jim's usual good humor was subdued

as he voiced their mutual uncertainty about the outcome of the interview.

"Do you think he'll laugh us out of the office, Bill?"

Affairs in the State office bustled on and succeeding visitors checked and re-checked their watches as they waited. Two hours later the three men emerged from Dr. Parrott's office and shook hands enthusiastically.

"I think I know just the church," said Dr. Parrott. "Let me try."

What was the dream that set two young men on an uncharted course, and prompted Dr. Parrott to risk advising a church to take a serious step without benefit of precedent, bringing a sense of adventure to the congregation of the church who dared?

As a preface to the explanation, Bill said, in his sincere manner, "Two thousand years ago Jesus sent his first disciples out two by two. If he thought that method was good, he must have had a reason. We'd like to try it his way."

So Bill Carpenter and Jim Pierson formed the first team ministry in our brotherhood so far as they know. They issued their declaration of inter-dependence--"cooperation rather than competition." They have become two ministers functioning as one and have given up ambitions for the

status of "top man" to serve and lose themselves in the blurred identity of the team.

There is no senior or junior pastor. Each man is equal in status, salary, division of duties, educational background, and age. The team is accountable to the board of elders; the departmental responsibilities are rotated annually and the pastoral duties such as weddings, funerals, counseling, and sick calls are shared equally.

While the elders in Van Nuys were deciding which course to take, Frank Kimper of the School of Theology at Claremont wrote urging them to consider seriously this type of ministry. He said he definitely believed the team ministry relationship was superior to the senior - associate type and went on to state these three points which he felt were important advantages.

1. The pooled ideas of a team result in the discovery of what is best for a situation as opposed to the certainty that a senior pastor always makes the final decision.

2. The feeling of equality eliminates anxiety about status and encourages critical evaluation and creative growth in the pastors as well as the programs for which they share responsibility.

3. The division of labor, with each assuming responsibility for certain aspects of the program, does

away with the authority role when one pastor directs and supervises the work of another.

He warned that in this, as in any search for a new pastor, the quality of the persons themselves, their spiritual depth, their understanding of human nature, and their common-sense approach to practical problems must be considered.

For all their youth, Bill and Jim exhibited these crucial qualities in their long-range vision of the issues which would arise from such an arrangement.

When reminded about the youthfulness of both the ministers one Van Nuys member quipped, "I'm not worried, together they're 55 and that's enough experience to handle almost anything."

Their planning to handle day-to-day problems speaks for itself. The Sunday morning sermons are purposely not methodically rotated. No one knows who will speak on a given Sunday. This keeps the members from deciding which Sundays to attend. They have faced and accepted, with Christian grace, the likelihood of uneven responses and expressions of diverging loyalties by the members. All letters to the membership and the weekly column in the church paper are signed by both ministers. Though they take their turn at the written word there is no discernible difference in the style of the texts.

The cooperation of the team extends past the principles to their wives, who believe in this ministry and know that the responsibility for the families to live compatibly, without jealousies, rests with them.

The team must stand together at all times, as the parents in a family who present the image of one hand on the helm. The next sentence should be in capital letters for here lies the secret of the entire effort. The key to the success of the team is the relationship between the two ministers. Individual honesty is paramount. They have developed the ability to give and take honest criticism, knowing the other personality could hurt or be hurt. Then they face the ego-smashing duty of taking the blame for two in the heartaches and failures. There are also enough credits to go around when the triumphs come.

The team ministry differs basically from the multiple staff ministry in that each member of the multiple staff usually specializes in a particular field such as music, education, or counseling. In the team each man performs a total ministry.

Will it work in actual practice?

"I've staked my reputation on it," says Dr. Parrott.

"It can't survive," say some of the ministers in the area who don't know the mental and spiritual

discipline employed by these two pioneers.

"A lone pastorate holds no attraction after this type of association," say Bill and Jim. They believe, without reservation, that the team will flourish under the ideal "cooperation rather than competition."

And the congregation at Van Nuys, what do they think about their future? One member, voicing the enthusiasm and confidence of the church, summed it all up when he said, "With leadership like this, just watch our smoke!"

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